ALTER-NATIONS

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Nationalisms, Terror, and the State in
Nineteenth-Century Britain and Ireland

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ABBREVIATIONS

C	*Chartism* (1839), Thomas Carlyle
CA	*Culture and Anarchy* (1867), Matthew Arnold
CW	*The Critical Writings,* James Joyce
CWC	*The Condition of the Working Class in England* (1845), Friedrich Engels
EI	*England and Ireland* (1868), John Stuart Mill
FI	*Political Writings,* vol. 3, *The First International and After,* Karl Marx
IRB	Irish Republican Brotherhood
NLI	National Library of Ireland
RFF	*Recollections of Fenians and Fenianism* (1896), John O'Leary
RU	*Repeal of the Union* (1848), Thomas Carlyle
SCL	*On the Study of Celtic Literature* (1866), Matthew Arnold
SH	*The Secret History of the Fenian Conspiracy* (1877), John Rutherford

ILLUSTRATIONS

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INTRODUCTION

THROUGHOUT the nineteenth century, Ireland and Britain are best described as "alter-nations." When British and Irish nationalisms are imagined and theorized in political writings and cultural production in this period, nationhood on each side of the Irish Sea exists, both discursively and materially, in a dialectical relation to the other. As in the case of alter-egos—inextricable and emerging from the phenomenon of colonialism, yet persistently different, even opposed—it is not possible to describe the British nation without reference to Ireland, and the same is true in reverse. Thus, in 1839, Thomas Carlyle declared that "Ireland, now for the first time, in such strange circuitous way, does find itself embarked in the same boat with England, to sail together, or to sink together."[1] Such a statement from an influential intellectual and political commentator gives expression to the entangled futures of Ireland and Britain that are the subject of this book. The metaphor of the shared boat provides an allegorical representation of Union. In addition, although writing about capitalist national crisis in this period, Carlyle suggests that British modernity and Irish modernity are impossibly bound and in fact must be understood in relation to one another; the national destinies of Britain and Ireland had become one. As Luke Gibbons reminds us,

1. "Chartism," in vol. 29 of *The Works of Thomas Carlyle,* ed. H. D. Traill, centenary ed. (London: Chapman and Hall, 1899), 140.

by the early twentieth century, James Joyce could contend that "[i]f Ireland looked to the image of England, . . . it would end up seeing its own distorted reflection—as if in the 'cracked looking glass of a servant.'"[2] Joyce's assertion uses the trope of the servant's mirror to suggest that, over the course of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth, Irish and British nationalisms and national identities not only existed in an intimate relation, but emerged as an endless, inextricable series of reflections and refractions. As we will see, these dialectical ideologies of nationhood were understood through the categories of race, class, religion, gender, and "terror" and played a foundational role in the emergence of the modern state in the United Kingdom. Furthermore, Joyce's claim that the mirror belongs to a "servant" suggests that at stake in these mirrorlike identities was power—both the colonial subordination of Ireland and the imperial domination of Britain. However, since the reader does not know whether Britain or Ireland stands as the servant who possesses the mirror, the trope also intimates that Britain remained in a condition of economic, cultural, and political dependence on Ireland in order to understand itself. In the nineteenth century, Britain and Ireland were indeed "alter-nations."

Alter-Nations explores this arc of thought—from Carlyle to Joyce—about Britain and Ireland over the course of the Victorian period. It argues that when British writing and cultural production engage with questions of nation, nationalism, and the state, these categories are most often understood in relation to Ireland, and more specifically to Irish anticolonial insurgency, what will come to be called "terror" and "terrorism." Thus, this book examines the complex relationship between British imperial nationalism and Irish anticolonial nationalism as envisioned in a variety of cultural texts in the Victorian period. By turning attention to the nineteenth-century relations between Britain and Ireland, *Alter-Nations* provides a genealogy of certain formations central to modern nationhood—for example, anti-immigrant capitalist nationalism, counterterrorism, and the modern state form. In particular, when Irish anticolonial nationalism is brought into view, we see in new ways the origins and development of categories such as "nationalism," "terror," and "the state." Indeed these categories, so central to the modern nation, are initially conceived in relation to and in opposition to Irish nationalist insurgency. Certain formations central to modernity appear, I argue, at the interface of imperial and anticolonial nationalisms in nineteenth-century Anglo–Irish relations. For example, in writings and other forms of cultural production

2. "Identity Without a Centre: Allegory, History and Irish Nationalism," in *Transformations in Irish Culture* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1996), 139.

in Britain and Ireland, we can trace the emergence of new narratives of the capitalist mode of production, narratives that center on both the immigration of colonial subjects to the imperial metropole and an understanding of Irish immigration, racial difference, and Irish violence in particular as central to capitalist national crisis in Britain. I also demonstrate that the modern idea of "terrorism" as irrational and racialized violence first comes into being in visual culture and journalistic writing of the 1860s. This new ideology of terrorism finds its counterpart in Victorian theorizations of the modern hegemonic state form, which justify the state's monopoly of violence by imagining its apparatuses as distinctly counterinsurgent and more specifically antiterrorist. At the same time, nineteenth-century Irish nationalist writings articulate forms of anticolonial critique that anticipate the problematics of Postcolonial Studies and that attempt to reimagine anticolonialism's relation to modernity, in particular the state, in generative and radical ways.

While this yoking together of British and Irish nationhood had begun centuries before the Victorian era, it was institutionalized through the Act of Union of 1800, the material unpinning of assertions such as Carlyle's and Joyce's. The Act of Union refashioned the British nation, creating the precarious new entity, "the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland," through the legal and juridical absorption of a colony into the imperial nation. Even the grammar of this new legislative creation reflects the ambivalence with which it was riven from the beginning. The name "United Kingdom" reflects a primary insistence that its various parts are solidly unified. However, Ireland remains attached by the conjunction "and," a grammatical reminder of the limits of incorporation and of the specter of a continued recalcitrance that no proclaimed Union could remedy. Such a close reading makes apparent the ways in which the Act of Union placed the Irish in a liminal and contradictory position. They were national subjects incorporated into the nation-state through parliamentary and economic structures, but they remained a colonized and alien population, denied fundamental rights of citizenship and subjecthood, and constructed as culturally, religiously, and racially other. This position rendered the Irish within the newly created United Kingdom vexatious in relation to questions of national belonging.

The Act of Union not only refashioned the British nation through the incorporation of Ireland and the Irish; the legislative act had a fundamental relationship to Irish anticolonial nationalisms and insurgency as they emerged in the late eighteenth century through the politics of the United Irishmen.[3]

3. For a history of the United Irishman and late eighteenth-century rebellion and resistance in Ireland, see Kevin Whelan, *The Tree of Liberty: Radicalism, Catholicism and the Construction of Irish Identity, 1760–1830* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1996).

Union was ratified in large part as a legislative response to "Irish receptivity to French ideas,"[4] to revolutionary and republican anticolonial insurgency that had long been seen as a dangerous manifestation of the anarchy inherent in the unruly Irish.[5] However, Union embodied a contradiction concerning that insurgency. While the creation of the United Kingdom extended the suppressive reach of the British state to Ireland in a more direct manner, Irish violence and revolutionary potential were now in a sense absorbed into the British nation; state domination became easier, but any sort of quarantine of insurrection within the borders of Ireland became a logical and literal impossibility. From the beginning, the implications of Union as a form of colonial control left British politicians and thinkers grappling with serious questions: How should the Irish be brought into the nation? Should they or could they assimilate? How could Irish difference be accommodated within the United Kingdom without producing violent and degenerative effects? How could Union be made effective while Irish difference in all its forms, but particularly anticolonialism, remained?

These questions intensified as the status of Irish subjects within the United Kingdom became more contradictory and confusing in the decades following Union. Religion had served as one of the most stable markers of the difference between Britain and Ireland and one of the most reliable rationalizations for persistent discrimination against Irish subjects in the United Kingdom. In 1829, the Catholic Emancipation Act dismantled, in however a proscribed and tenuous way, some of the legal disabilities to which Catholics residing within the United Kingdom were subject. As Gauri Viswanathan has demonstrated persuasively, legislation such as the Catholic Emancipation Bill of 1828 exemplifies how "religious tolerance achieves its supreme expression as an act of incorporation, consolidation, and homogenization."[6] In the case of writings such as those by Thomas Carlyle that attempt to understand and to theorize the place of the Irish within the United Kingdom, this homogenization becomes part of a contradictory double movement required for the consolidating reconstitution of the British nation-state. While Catholic Emancipation required that Irish Catholics become "non-Catholic Catholics" in the eyes of the state,[7] the homogenizing and incorporating force of this

4. Roy Foster, *Modern Ireland 1600–1972* (London: Allen Lane and Penguin, 1988), 282.

5. For more on the history of these discourses, see Mary Hickman, *Religion, Class and Identity: The State, the Catholic Church and the Education of the Irish in Britain* (Aldershot, England: Avebury, 1995), 72–89.

6. *Outside the Fold: Conversion, Modernity, and Belief* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998), 23.

7. Ibid. 3.

legislation worked in tandem with an intensifying anti-Irish racism that othered the Irish. Etienne Balibar has argued that such a paradox is a structuring feature of the racist nationalisms that are the heritage of colonialism; he describes "a fluctuating combination of continued exteriorization and 'internal exclusion'" and the articulation of the "apparently antithetical forms" of the "interiorization of the exterior" and the "exteriorization of the interior."[8]

Thus, as Mary Hickman suggests, throughout the nineteenth century the Irish were subject to a racism structured paradoxically by material and discursive strategies of national incorporation and of segregation and differentiation.[9] Such ambivalence found expression in the very legislation of the Catholic Emancipation Act that, while ending some disabilities against Catholics, also contained a catalogue of disabilities to which Catholics would continue to be subject; the act was also accompanied by legislation that disenfranchised 40 shilling freeholders in Ireland, a measure that effectively nullified suffrage for most of the Irish Catholic population in the United Kingdom. The gesture of incorporation represented by Catholic Emancipation reveals the profoundly ambivalent frame in which the absorption of the Irish always took place. *Alter-Nations* begins its work in the decade immediately following Catholic Emancipation, when the question of Britain's relation to Ireland became more urgent.

This book argues that, post-Emancipation as state discrimination against the Irish on the basis of religion appeared to lose some of its force, and as Irish immigration to Britain increased in the 1830s and 1840s, racial and cultural understandings of difference came to the fore as primary modes of articulating the enduring separateness of Ireland and the Irish within the United Kingdom.[10] These ideologies of difference were central to both British colonialist nationalism and Irish anticolonial nationalism. In other words, the dialectic between British and Irish nationhood was most often articulated, I will show, through Victorian racialism, not religion. I am not arguing that anti-Catholicism was wholly replaced by racial discrimination against the Irish or that the discourse of Irish racial difference first emerged in the early nineteenth century. However, while these discourses had long been present and were always mutually constitutive, the passing of Catholic Emancipation legislation marked a shift in the structure of their articulation. Rather than

8. "Racism and Nationalism," in Etienne Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein, *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities* (London: Verso, 1988), 43.

9. Hickman 57.

10. A similar argument concerning the coexistence and imbrication of anti-Irish racism and anti-Catholicism is made by Hickman in *Religion, Class, and Identity.*

religion being a raced category, race now become a more primary identificatory structure that was imbricated with persistent anti-Catholic discourse.[11] For Irish writers, Union and subsequent Catholic Emancipation also shifted the focus of nationalism to cultural and racial forms of identity. In the case of more radical nationalisms such as the Young Ireland movement and Fenianism, resistance to Union required an "Irishness" that would transcend sectarianism and might include the Anglo-Irish ascendancy in their visions of national identity.

Thus, in theorizing nationalisms and national identity, *Alter-Nations* will focus less on religious difference and more on race, class, and gender as modes of representing Irish difference in colonialist and anticolonial politics. Throughout the book, I choose to use the term "race," rather than a category such as ethnicity, because the nineteenth-century British and Irish writers with whom I engage use the idea of "race" to articulate the difference between British and Irish national identity. As George Stocking has argued in *Victorian Anthropology,* the term "race" in nineteenth-century Britain served as a widespread social construction in which populations, including the Irish, were classified according to their common descent from a particular region; these genealogies were assumed to determine certain racial characteristics—physical, psychological, and cultural. By the mid-nineteenth century, "race" had taken on a clearly biological meaning,[12] and well before this transformation, racial identification implied the position of populations somewhere on an index of human progress that suggested the relative "civilization" or "savagery" of particular races.

As many scholars working in Irish Studies have argued, the history of ideas of Irish racial difference begins in the sixteenth century. This history may be difficult to comprehend or to contextualize in the U.S. academy in which too often an American idea of race as determined by skin color is made transhistorical and then applied to other locations and historical periods. However, it is important to remember that we are dealing with a different racial formation in Victorian Britain, one that imagined race through culture and often did not use the physical marker of the epidermal as a primary mode of racial classification.[13] Therefore, despite a retrospective identification

11. For an exploration of the relationship between anti-Catholicism, race, and Empire, see Luke Gibbons, *Gaelic Gothic: Race, Colonization and Irish Culture* (Galway: Arlen House, 2004), 11–12.

12. George Stocking, *Victorian Anthropology* (New York: Free Press, 1987), 63.

13. It is also important to remember that even the Irish in America were subject to a protracted, contested, and uneven process of assimilation to the U.S. category of whiteness. See David Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class* (New York: Verso, 1991) and Theodore Allen, *The Invention of the White Race* (London: Verso, 1994).

of the Irish as a white colonized population, this both is and is not the case in nineteenth-century Britain. Rather this indeterminacy, the fact that the colonized Irish incited the need for a definition of race that defied easy visual coding, produced all the more anxiety about their presence within the United Kingdom.

In "Race against Time: Racial Discourse and Irish History," Luke Gibbons writes:

> . . . a native population which happened to be white was an affront to the very idea of the 'white man's burden,' and threw into disarray some of the constitutive categories of colonial discourse. The 'otherness' and alien character of Irish experience was all the more disconcerting precisely because it did not lend itself to visible racial divisions. . . . [14]

Following this invaluable insight, it is important to understand the way that "race" operates in Victorian ideologies of British and Irish national identity through the structures of both racialism and racism. Anthony Appiah has defined "racialism" as systems of knowledge, in particular scientific knowledge, that develop in the early modern period to "divide human beings into a small number of groups, called 'races,' in such a way that all members of these races shared certain fundamental, biologically heritable, moral and intellectual characteristics that they do not share with members of any other race."[15] As Kim Hall has suggested in her study of race in early modern England, the idea of racialism is particularly useful because it allows critics to investigate ideologies of race as knowledge formations that are related to yet separate from institutionalized racism.[16] This is not to say that racialism concerning the Irish did not coexist with racism. Of course it did. But Victorian racialism concerning the Irish is inextricable from racialized ideas of Britishness that were about the practice of rather than the subjection to racism. Irish nationalists throughout the nineteenth century, such as the writers of the Young Ireland movement,[17] engaged in forms of racialist thought about Irish identity that served as the basis of an anticolonial politics rather than the justification of colonization. Therefore, these two distinct terms—racialism and racism—

14. In *Transformations in Irish Culture* 149.

15. "Race," in *Critical Terms for Literary Study,* ed. Frank Lentricchia and Thomas McLaughlin (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 276.

16. *Things of Darkness: Economies of Race and Gender in Early Modern England* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995), 29.

17. For a history of the Young Ireland movement, see Richard Davis, *The Young Ireland Movement* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1987).

provide a useful way to investigate racial formations in the Victorian United Kingdom, in particular how different ideas of race secure or challenge power in multiple, varied ways. They allow one to think through "race" in a variety of forms and in relation to its range of effects on both "subjects" and "objects."

When I use the term "racism" to discuss the ways that ideas of Irish racial difference are institutionalized in the colonial relation, I follow the elaboration provided by Etienne Balibar. He makes clear the intimate relation between racialism and racism:

> Racism—a true 'total social phenomenon'—inscribed itself in practices (forms of violence, contempt, intolerance, humiliation and exploitation), in discourses and representations which are so many intellectual elaborations of the phantasm of prophylaxis or segregation (the need to purify the social body, to preserve 'one's own' or 'our' identity from all forms of mixing, interbreeding or invasion) and which are articulated around stigmata of otherness (name, skin color, religious practices). It therefore organizes affects (the psychological study of these has concentrated upon describing their obsessive character and also their irrational ambivalence) by conferring upon them a stereotyped form, as regards both their 'objects' and their 'subjects.' It is this combination of practices, discourses, and representations in a network of affective stereotypes which enables us to give an account of the formation of a racist community (or a community of racists, among whom there exist bonds of 'imitation' over a distance) and also of the way in which, as a mirror image, individuals and collectivities that are prey to racism (its 'objects') find themselves constrained to see themselves as a community.[18]

Here Balibar, who argues convincingly elsewhere that racism and nationalism are mutually constitutive categories, lays out a complex and incredibly productive way to understand the ways that racism and its attendant ideology of racialism function. It is my contention that imperialist nationalism, which has racism at its center, functions in similar manifold ways as the racist ideology that Balibar describes. *Alter-Nations* will investigate the 'social phenomenon' of nationalism, under the assumption that it operates much the way that racism does according to Balibar; this is why the two categories—race and nation—so often operate in tandem. The texts that I read stand as some of the representations that Balibar describes in that they call into being national communities in relation to their "mirror images."

18. "Is there a 'Neo-Racism'?" in Balibar and Wallerstein 17–18.

However, racialism and racism are just two of the ways through which these nationalisms are constituted. As I show, other primary identificatory categories are always in play as well. I have already suggested that in the discourse of Irish national difference, religion is a raced category, but race is also understood through religion. In the same way, class, gender, culture, and sexuality are all mobilized in service of the production of nationalisms and national identities. For example, I will demonstrate that, in the early Victorian period, class and revolutionary possibility are understood through a racialized vision of Irishness, and later I reveal the ways in which the category of terrorism when applied to Irish anticolonialism is raced, gendered, and sexualized. Again, I work to read these categories as mutually constitutive rather than discrete.

When I study these representations of the dialectic relation of British and Irish nationalisms and nationhood in popular culture, political writing, and political theory, I am not simply engaging in an analysis of the realm of abstract ideas or discourse. Rather, my analysis has materialist stakes. One primary example is *Alter-Nations*' examination of the mutually constitutive relationship between Ireland, particular Irish anticolonial insurgency, and the modern state form. Much generative scholarship has demonstrated that the colonies served as a kind of laboratory for state power, as innovations such as national education and fingerprinting, to name just two, were tested in the colonies before being imported "home" to become integral apparatuses of the modern state.[19] But *Alter-Nations* argues that the modern hegemonic state that emerges in Britain during the mid-nineteenth century—in political theory, popular representations, and material innovations of its apparatuses and its citizenry—was fashioned in relation to Irish insurgency. While the ground for this state formation was laid in the early nineteenth century, I focus significant attention on the late 1860s and 1870s as the historical conjuncture during which this counterinsurgent state emerged. Theorists of the state have identified this period as critical to the transformation of the state into its modern hegemonic form. In their analysis of English state formation, Philip Corrigan and Derek Sayer identify the mid-nineteenth century as the period during which the recognizably modern democratic state comes into being in Britain.[20] David Lloyd and Paul Thomas have described this

19. For example, see Gauri Viswanathan, *Masks of Conquest: Literary Study and British Rule in India* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989); and Jane Caplan and John Torpey, eds., *Documenting Individual Identity: State Practices and the Modern World* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001).

20. *The Great Arch: English State Formation as Cultural Revolution* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1985).

process as "the crystallization of the Victorian state and its transition from a predominately coercive to a hegemonic form" between 1860 and 1870, and "the saturation of discourse on society with an 'idea of the state' or, more evidently, with the subordinate conception of the proper relation of the subject as citizen to the state."[21] While much of this work focuses on both the Reform Acts of 1867 and 1868 and the institutionalization of national education in Britain, I trace the ways in which this developing state and its newly constituted citizenry are understood in relation to Ireland. If mid-Victorian British nationalism has at its heart a commitment to the modern strong state, that state is a distinctly colonialist, Unionist, and antiterrorist institution that hegemonizes its subjects through their consent to its power. In other words, what Michel Foucault has called the "pact of security" between the state and its subject population takes shape in mid-Victorian Britain through ideologies and new forms of biopower that claimed to offer both British and Irish subjects security in relation to Irish anticolonial insurgency, what came to be called "terrorism."[22]

By focusing on the constitutive relationship between British imperialist nationalism, the state, and Irish anticolonial struggle in the nineteenth century, *Alter-Nations* seeks to make an intervention into work on colonialism and imperialism in the field of Victorian Studies. Working at the intersection of Postcolonial Studies and scholarship on nineteenth-century Britain, numerous scholars have demonstrated the ways in which colonialism and imperialism were central to Britain's cultural and political history as well as the ways in which British nationhood was constituted and understood in relation to Empire.[23] Yet, surprisingly little attention has been devoted to the internal colony that was part of the United Kingdom—Ireland.[24] In *Alter-*

21. *Culture and the State* (New York: Routledge, 1998), 115.

22. Cited in Michel Senellart, "Course Context," in Michel Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the College de France, 1977–1978,* trans. Graham Burchell (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 372–73.

23. The scholarship to which I refer includes Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Knopf, 1993); Patrick Brantlinger, *Rule of Darkness: British Literature and Imperialism, 1830–1914* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1988); Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (New York: Routledge, 1995); Susan Meyer, *Imperialism at Home: Race and Victorian Women's Fiction* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996), among many others.

24. There are some notable exceptions to this observation. For example, Mary Poovey has turned her attention to Ireland in *Making a Social Body: British Cultural Formation, 1830–1864* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), and again in *The History of the Modern Fact: Problems of Knowledge in the Sciences of Wealth and Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), chapter 3. See also Catherine Hall, Keith McClelland, and Jane Rendall, *Defining the Victorian Nation: Class, Race, Gender, and the Reform Act of 1867* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Mary Jean Corbett, *Allegories of Union in Irish and English Writing, 1790–1870: Politics, History and the Family from Edgeworth to Arnold* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); and Gordon Bigelow, *Fiction,*

Nations, I seek to address this crucial elision and to reconceptualize the history of modern nationhood in Britain. In the field of Irish Studies, the last decade has seen increasing attention to the nineteenth century in a field that had too often turned its scholarly lens almost exclusively on the eighteenth and twentieth centuries.[25] By bringing Irish Studies into dialogue with Victorian Studies, I make interventions into our understanding of the genealogies of nation, nationalism, the state, terrorism, and postcolonial theory, and claim that we can better understand the emergence of these formations through careful attention to the colonial relationship between Britain and Ireland. Such genealogical work makes clear that my book has clear contemporary stakes. For example, *Alter-Nations* provides a cultural history of the state that helps to explain the modern discourse of terrorism. In particular, I argue that nineteenth-century anti-Irish discourse comprises the first "war on terror," shedding new light on contemporary geopolitics. In addition, my reading of Irish writing works to challenge the historical narrative of postcolonialism, asserting that we can find theorizations of the challenges of decolonization much earlier than most historical narratives suggest.

Readers will notice that, in the chapters that follow, *Alter-Nations* focuses much attention on Fenianism, a radical anticolonial movement seemingly forgotten by many historians and cultural critics of nineteenth-century Britain and Ireland. Yet, if we return to crucial texts that articulate British nationalism and the state in the Victorian period, it is impossible to ignore their preoccupation with Fenian organizations and their forms of insurgency. Fenianism is the anticolonial politics in relation to which the British nation-state is theorized and materialized in this period. By directing my attention to representations of Fenian resistance, I hope to recover a history of Irish insurgency that was a constitutive element of the Victorian period's representations and theorizations of capitalism, Empire, and the nation-state. My work is not historiographical; instead it emerges from the disciplines of literary and cultural studies, building on a belief that ideologies of nation and state are theorized and disseminated in a variety of texts that stand in a dialectical relationship to material transformations and that the reading practices of literary scholars can be most useful for understanding this dynamic relationship between culture, nation, and state. Yet, my book seeks to follow

Famine and the Rise of Economics in Victorian Britain and Ireland (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

25. Here the work of Luke Gibbons, David Lloyd, Joep Leerson, Margaret Kelleher, and Sean Ryder comes to mind. See also the recently published *Nineteenth Century Ireland: A Guide to Recent Research,* ed. Laurence Geary and Margaret Kelleher (Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 2005).

and has similar stakes as the projects of historians such as Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker as well some of the members of the Subaltern Studies collective. In *The Many-Headed Hydra,* Linebaugh and Rediker examine occluded forms of radicalism in relation to which new forms of modern power came into being. They provide an alternative to the writing of "history that has long been the captive of the nation-state."[26] Similarly, work in the Subaltern Studies collective by scholars such as Partha Chatterjee, Dipesh Chakrabarty, and Ranajit Guha seeks to challenge narratives of modernity and the capture of history by nationalist and imperialist historicism.[27] My own work seeks to examine how dominant Victorian British histories, theorizations, and representations of nation and state imagine categories and institutions crucial to their modernity in relation to Ireland. At the same time, I intend to look at these formations of culture and politics as inherently challenged by that which they define themselves against, and thus my readings also seek to reveal an alternative subaltern past not only through Fenianism's centrality to nineteenth-century British nationalism and state formation but through examination of how Fenians challenged the writing of dominant forms of history and politics at the end of the nineteenth century. As Dipesh Chakrabarty reminds us,

> [we must] see the modern as inevitably contested, to write over the given and privileged narratives of citizenship other narratives of human connection that draw sustenance from dreamed-up pasts and futures where collectivities are defined neither by the rituals of citizenship nor by the nightmare of 'tradition' that 'modernity' creates . . . the themes of citizenship and the nation-state dominate our narratives of historical transition, [and] these dreams are what the modern represses in order to be.[28]

26. Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners, and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic* (Boston: Beacon, 2000), 7.

27. While the work of these three historians is different in important respects, each of these members of the Subaltern Studies collective engages with the kind of larger political and theoretical framework to which I am referring. Partha Chatterjee has written that "[n]ow the task is to trace in their mutually conditioned historicities the specific forms that have appeared, on the one hand, in the domain defined by the hegemonic project of nationalist modernity, and on the other, in the numerous fragmented resistances to that normalizing project." *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), 13. Similarly, Ranajit Guha has called for "historicality to be rescued from its containment in World History" and its colonialist and statist structures. *History at the Limit of World-History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 6. See also Dipesh Chakrabarty's work in *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference,* 2nd ed. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007) and *Habitations of Modernity: Essays in the Wake of Subaltern Studies* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002).

28. *Provincializing Europe,* 2nd ed. (2007), 46.

Devoting careful attention to Fenianism in Victorian Britain allows *Alter-Nations* to investigate and to challenge those dominant histories while simultaneously exploring the repressed dreams of those who sought to challenge the counterinsurgent, antiterrorist nation-state to which they were subject and by which they were represented in political and cultural forms.

Toward this end, this book will interrogate four key moments in British and Irish literary and cultural production during the nineteenth century. In chapter 1, I turn my attention to the writings of Karl Marx and Thomas Carlyle in order to explore how capitalist national crisis in Victorian Britain must be understood as a crisis of Britain's colonial relation to Ireland. In the work of both radical and conservative writers, the discourse of Irish racial difference and an attendant Saxon nationalism, I argue, becomes central to understanding the workings of nineteenth-century capitalist modernity. Irish immigration and Irish violence in particular are posited as both constitutive to and threatening to British capitalism. I also examine Elizabeth Gaskell's *North and South* and the writings of Friedrich Engels in order to explore how the "condition of England question," the most common articulation of this national crisis, is represented in a variety of forms and at several moments in the early and mid-nineteenth century.

Chapter 2 engages with the writings of Matthew Arnold and John Stuart Mill on the state. I demonstrate that, in both writers' work on state formation and representative government, such as Arnold's *Culture and Anarchy* and Mill's influential essay "England and Ireland," the modern hegemonic state is understood in relation to Fenianism. In fact, the Fenian becomes a constitutive element in mid-Victorian theories of the Liberal state, one that rationalizes violence against both citizens and colonial subjects as a necessary condition of possibility for effectively harmonizing state power. Hence, both theorists use the specter of Fenian violence to secure the consent of the newly enfranchised working class to be subject to the state as an apparatus of violence. The state's martial law is renarrated as self-preservation and self-protection, occluding the way that exceptional circumstances in fact become the rule of state power; anticolonial nationalism and counterinsurgency, I show, become constitutive to modern state power in Britain.

Chapter 3 turns to representations of Fenianism in mid-Victorian newspaper writing and political cartoons. I argue that Fenianism was the first radical insurrectionary form of anticolonialism to be described as "terrorist" in the modern sense. I trace the emergence of this modern discourse of terrorism in its visual and textual representations as an invisible masculine threat, a monstrous presence lurking within the United Kingdom, an ever-present menace

that warranted continual panic on the part of its potential victims. The new figure of the terrorist is distinctly raced and gendered in ways that this chapter explores in detail. This chapter looks at cultural production concerning Fenian terrorists as an allegorical staging of one of the founding mythologies and contradictions of the modern state. The condemnation of anticolonial violence legitimates state violence and new forms of power, but presents this institutionalized violence as purely reactive and designed to protect its citizens. In other words, the figuration of the terrorist obscures the originary nature of the imperial state's colonial and domestic violence. Thus, the new discourse of terrorism serves to hegemonize British and Irish subjects in relation to the imperial state, inciting their consent to be governed by a monopoly of violence.

Chapter 4 takes up Edward Said's call to engage in contrapuntal criticism by turning to late nineteenth-century Irish nationalist writing, the genre of Fenian recollections. This little-known archive of writing engages thematically, theoretically, and formally in a complex critique of the independent postcolonial nation-state and modernity that are coming into being at the turn of century in Ireland. A melancholic body of writing, the recollections, I argue, refuse to mourn and thus to foreclose the loss of certain radical potentialities that are repressed as Ireland prepares to institutionalize itself in the form of the modern nation-state. The conventions and concerns of this genre of writing constitute a kind of proleptic theorization of some of the central concerns of Postcolonial Studies—a critique of the prose of counterinsurgency and historicism, a critique of modern institutionality, in particular that of the state, and a melancholic refusal to foreclose certain radical political possibilities during the process of decolonization.

CHAPTER 1

"THE CONDITION OF ENGLAND" AND THE QUESTION OF IRELAND

Anti-Irish Racism and Saxon Nationalism in Victorian Writings on Capitalist National Crisis

IN A LETTER to Engels in December 1869, Karl Marx reports on his progress in organizing the British proletariat in Victorian London. He writes of several discussions among the members of the General Council of the First International, but in particular of their recent attention to the "Irish question." Marx had prepared a presentation for the council in which he set forth his own ideas about the importance of Ireland to the First International's revolutionary politics. He explains to Engels:

> The way I shall present the matter next Tuesday is this: I shall say that quite apart from all the 'international' and 'humane' phrases about justice-for-Ireland—which are taken for granted in the International Council—it is in *the direct and absolute interests of the English working class* to get rid of their present connection with Ireland. . . . I long believed it was possible to overthrow the Irish regime by way of the English working-class ascendancy. This is the position I always represented in the *New York Tribune.* A deeper study has now convinced me of the opposite. The English working class will never achieve anything before it has got rid of Ireland. The lever must be applied in Ireland.[1]

1. Marx to Engels, December 10, 1869, in *Political Writings,* vol. 3, *The First International and After,* ed. D. Fernbach (New York: Penguin, 1974), 166–67. Original emphasis. Henceforth, writings from this volume will be cited as FI.

This bold statement articulates an understanding of Anglo–Irish relations that Marx had developed over the course of the 1860s. By urging the termination of the "present connection with Ireland," Marx argues for the necessity of the end of Ireland's Union with Britain.[2] It is one of the few moments in his monumental corpus on the capitalist mode of production that colonialism and anticolonial nationalism would play such a prominent, indeed a primary, role in his economic analysis and his theory of proletarian revolution. His call for "get[ting] rid of their present connection with Ireland" is, as his language indicates, perhaps instrumental and certainly ambivalent, evincing a troubled relationship to anticolonial nationalism that would haunt Marx's analysis of Ireland in significant ways. Nonetheless, in a crucial moment often overlooked by contemporary readers, Marx asserts that the success of the agenda of radical Irish anticolonialism—Repeal of the Act of Union and an independent Ireland—was the very condition of possibility for the revolution of English workers and the overthrow of capitalism.[3]

Marx came to this position over time as he engaged more and more with Ireland in both his public and private work. He wrote a series of articles concerning Ireland throughout the 1860s, most of which were published in the *New York Daily Tribune* or in radical newspapers on the Continent. He also delivered speeches to the First International outlining the relevance, indeed the urgency, of the Irish question to proletarian internationalism. This archive of writings analyzes the crucial place of Ireland in the workings of Capital in Britain, and documents Marx's movement toward identifying Ireland as the site that might make revolution in Britain possible. In numerous essays, letters, and papers, he contends that Ireland played a foundational role in the expansion and consolidation of the capitalist mode of production in Britain. As he suggests in *Capital,* Volume 1, Ireland supplied a reserve army of labor for British industrialists[4] as well as a source of raw materials and goods that could be obtained below market value. At the same time, the colony provided

2. Marx articulates this position even more explicitly in a confidential communication to the General Council in 1870 when he writes, " . . . quite apart from international justice, it is a precondition to the emancipation of the English working class to transform the present forced union (i.e. the enslavement of Ireland) into equal and free confederation if possible, into complete separation if need be." Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Ireland and the Irish Question* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1971), 255.

3. Marx called directly for the English workers to make Repeal of the Union "an article of their *pronunziamento.*" Marx to Engels, November 30, 1867, *FI* 161. At the same time, he continually expressed his distaste for many Fenian nationalists and their politics, writing, "I don't like being involved with people like [them]" (*FI* 159). As his language indicates when he insists on "[getting rid] of Ireland," his embrace of Irish nationalism was ambivalent at best.

4. *Capital,* vol. 1, trans. Ben Fowkes (New York: Penguin Books, 1976), 860.

a site in which the landed aristocracy could invest and maintain its capital in an unassailable form, one not subject to regulation. Marx also maintains that unrest in Ireland provided "the only pretext the English government has for retaining a big standing army, which, if need be, as has happened before, can be used against the English workers after having done its military training in Ireland."[5] By 1869, as the opening passage demonstrates, Ireland came to occupy a critical position in his understanding of European capitalism, standing as "the lever" that might crack open the workings of Capital in Britain.

Marx's persistent attention to Ireland can be explained as part of his intellectual and political investment in England as the most developed capitalist nation and therefore the location most likely to produce the start of the revolution that he anticipated and for which he organized. Marx spent years organizing in London and wrote voluminously about Britain; for example, in *Capital,* he argued that "England cannot be treated as a country along with other countries. She must be treated as the metropolis of capital" (253). In a European context, Marx first saw England as "this great lever of proletarian revolution" (252). However, throughout the nineteenth century, England existed as part of a larger economic unit—the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. Thus, Marx came to understand Ireland as Britain's vulnerable point; the internal colony secured British national and imperial wealth but at the same time stood as a threat to the nation's security due to persistent resistance to colonial domination. Eventually Marx would claim: "To accelerate the social development in Europe, you must push the catastrophe of official England. To do so, you must attack her in Ireland. That's her weakest point. Ireland lost, the 'British Empire' gone, and the class war in England, till now somnolent and chronic, will assume acute forms" (404). He imagined revolution telescoping outward from Ireland, the only colony within Europe. As Robert Young asserts, at this moment in Marx's work, "colonized peoples should now play a key, active role in initiating European and world revolution from the colonies [and n]ationalism thus here became the key to the revolutionary potential of a colony which must become nationalistic in order to provide the catalyst for international revolution."[6]

5. Marx and Engels 255.

6. *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), 107. For an important review of the place of colonialism and imperialism in Marx's work, see chapter 9, 101–12. See also Kevin B. Anderson, *Marx at the Margins: On Nationalism, Ethnicity, and Non-Western Societies* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2010). Elsie B. Michie provides an overview in *Outside the Pale: Cultural Exclusion, Gender Difference and the Victorian Woman Writer* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993), 50–52. Also, Luke Gibbons offers a brief discussion of Marx and Engels on the Irish and Irish racial difference in the British working class in *Gaelic Gothic: Race, Colonialism and Irish Culture* (Galway: Arlen House, 2004), 62–63.

What do we make of this assertion in the broader context of Marx's thought and also when we read it through the lens of the politics of "United Kingdom" throughout the first half of the nineteenth century? This chapter will answer that question by reading Marx's writings on Ireland as an intervention into a major political and discursive current in mid-Victorian Britain. His writings on Ireland stand as one crucial example, perhaps the progressive culmination, of the ways in which, in nineteenth-century Britain, critiques of capitalism and new discourses of national crisis were inseparable from the question of Ireland, specifically imperialist nationalisms grounded in a notion of Irish difference. I am locating Marx's work on Ireland as part of a larger formation of Victorian writing that engages with what I call "capitalist national crisis." The term "capitalist national crisis" refers to an ideological formation that sees the expansion and consolidation of capitalism as producing a state of intense crisis and understands that crisis through the lens of the nation-state as a fundamental unit of social, economic, and cultural organization. In other words, the nation-state is treated as a diagnostic entity and cipher that allows the consequences of rapacious Capital to be understood because it stands as Capital's primary mode of organization. Most often, representations of capitalist national crisis signal its advent by calling attention to class conflict, economic emergency, and various forms of social degeneration. The politics of Victorian capitalist national crisis can be quite varied—radical, liberal, or conservative. Conservative and liberal intellectuals and writers alike grappled with how the destructive results of capitalism might be circumvented without disturbing fundamentally the mode of production. Preventing unrest and revolution was a primary imperative in such projects. However, for radicals such as Marx and Engels, diagnosing capitalist national crisis in Britain was a method of recognizing and encouraging the radical economic, social, and political transformation that might follow such a state of emergency. Hastening oncoming crisis to the point of revolution was at the center of socialist and dialectical thought in the nineteenth century, and for Marx, and Engels as well, this political process came to have Ireland at its center.

This chapter investigates how the Irish question played a constitutive role in the ways that thinkers across a wide political spectrum understood Capital's development in Britain and the forms of crisis that they articulated in the early and mid-Victorian period. I will demonstrate that Marx's writings on Ireland in fact emerge from an ideological formation that begins in early Victorian writings on capitalist national crisis. Thus, I contextualize this unusual and productive moment in Marxist thought by using a retrospective approach—by looking backward at formative early Victorian understandings

of capitalist national crisis in political analysis and literary representation. I see Marx's turn toward Anglo–Irish relations and questions of race and nation not as anomalous but in fact as typical if not diagnostic. In letters and articles, he identifies a crucial process in which British capitalism came to have both colonialist nationalism and anti-Irish racism at its center. Whether toward conservative ends in the case of Thomas Carlyle or as part of a burgeoning radical politics in the work of Engels and Marx, early Victorian engagements with Britain's capitalist transformation turned to Britain's relation with Ireland as the key to understanding and resolving the nation's most pressing national questions.

By examining the place of Ireland in the discourse of "capitalist national crisis," we can trace the emergence and crystallization of certain ideological formations that would become central and familiar features of modernity. For example, at the center of many articulations of "capitalist national crisis" stands an anti-immigrant politics concerning migrant colonial subjects, one whose contours foreshadow debates that we associate primarily with the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. In addition, such xenophobia finds expression in a modern vision of society as subject to "terror" in various forms, particularly revolutionary possibility that is displaced onto the raced bodies of immigrants. This terror can be ameliorated in several ways: the spread of a dominant imperialist nationalism; the reimagining of citizenship; and the constitution of the state into new forms. As we will see, all of these processes center on Ireland as providing the subjects whose bodies come to define that new nationalism as well as new modes of state formation.

My contention is that British nationalism and the nation-state in this period cannot be understood without attending to Irish difference and to the material and ideological place of Ireland within the United Kingdom. Hence, Marx identifies Ireland as "the lever [that] must be applied" because the internal colony was also the lynchpin that held together fundamental formations in modern Britain. In order to understand the place of Ireland in Marxist thought, we must first turn backward to a transformation that takes place in the early Victorian period—the first articulations of modern national crisis that entwine class conflict, anti-immigrant politics, and an idea of "terror" as produced by potentially revolutionary immigrant subjects. We can locate this formation in the work of Thomas Carlyle, whose writings on the British working class in fact had a profound influence on both Marx's and Engels's understandings of Victorian Britain.[7] Indeed, Carlyle's writings transformed

7. For an exploration of Carlyle's influence on the early work of Engels, see Amy E. Martin,

a generation of intellectuals and politicians, and effected a major ideological shift in the way that the category of 'nation' was understood in Britain. As George Eliot wrote with ambivalence and regret in 1855:

> It is an idle question to ask whether his [Carlyle's] books will be read a century hence; if they were all burnt as the grandest of Suttees on his funeral pile, it would be only like cutting down an oak after its acorns have sown a forest. For there is hardly a superior or active mind of his generation that has not been modified by Carlyle's writings; there has hardly been an English book written for the last ten or twelve years that would not have been different if Carlyle had not lived.[8]

"THE CONDITION OF ENGLAND" AND THE QUESTION OF IRELAND

NATIONALISM, RACE, AND IMMIGRATION IN CARLYLE'S "CHARTISM"

In his 1839 pamphlet "Chartism," Thomas Carlyle assesses class conflict and working-class radicalism in Britain and declares a national crisis. He presents this crisis to his readers in the form of an urgent query: the "condition of England question."[9] This formulation transformed the political and cultural landscape of early Victorian Britain.[10] A series of diverse social and political concerns came to be signified by Carlyle's phrase. However, they can all be encompassed within the larger question that they posed: how did capitalist expansion, new class and social relations, and working-class discontent affect the nation and more specifically produce a seemingly self-evident, ubiquitous state of national crisis?

The "condition of England question" was asked and answered obsessively by politicians and social reformers, such as Edwin Chadwick, whose

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"Blood Transfusions: Constructions of Irish Racial Difference, the English Working-Class, and Revolutionary Possibility in the work of Carlyle and Engels," *Victorian Literature and Culture* 32, no. 1 (March 2004): 83–102. Marx also cites Carlyle in *Capital,* vol. 1.

8. Cited in Simon Heffer, *Moral Desperado: A Life of Thomas Carlyle* (London: Phoenix Grant, 1995), 1.

9. This phrase appears at the start of "*Chartism*" as the title of the first chapter. Throughout this chapter, I cite "Chartism," in vol. 29 of *The Works of Thomas Carlyle,* ed. H. D. Traill, centenary ed. (London: Chapman and Hall, 1899). Henceforth, I indicate this text parenthetically as *C.*

10. Catherine Hall argues that Carlyle is one of several middle-class male intellectuals in nineteenth-century Britain who played a critical role in reformulating English identity through his writings on the nation and its imperial destiny. "Competing Masculinities: Thomas Carlyle, John Stuart Mill, and the Case of Governor Eyre," in *White, Male, and Middle-Class: Explorations in Feminism and History* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 256–57.

reports on the condition of the English poor were central to Parliamentary debates about sanitation and the Poor Laws.[11] The analysis provided by Carlyle shaped the thought of radical theorists of capitalism such as Engels and Marx, who saw his diagnosis of proletarian unemployment and poor living conditions as central to their vision of the dialectical movement of history toward revolution. In addition, an entire generation of novelists, including Charles Dickens, Elizabeth Gaskell, and Charles Kingsley, took up Carlyle's question and produced the most important literary innovation of the Victorian period—the genre of social realist fiction, also called 'the condition of England' novel. Before "Chartism," such articulations of national crisis did not exist, and a mere decade after the pamphlet's publication, the ideological and discursive terrain of Britain had been transformed. The "condition of England question" became the primary framework through which the state of the nation, in particular in relation to capitalist and colonial expansion, came to be understood.[12]

In a sense, all these novelists, intellectuals, and political thinkers were recruited into a process of national diagnosis and treatment that was central to Carlyle's original articulation of the "condition of England question." Carlyle first represents early Victorian national crisis by imagining England as a diseased national body. For him, Chartist politics and the working-class discontent that produced it are outward signs of a virulent illness ravaging the nation—"boils" and "symptoms on the surface [which] you abolish to no purpose, if the disease is left untouched" (*C* 120). Pathologizing proletarian insurgency allows Carlyle to make a critical distinction between the "chimera" and the "essence" of the disease of unrest (*C* 119), between its legible symptoms and the deeper causes that they signify. By searching for "essence," Carlyle insists that he offers an effective epidemiology of national crisis—a comprehensive study of the causes, transmission, and potential control of Chartist agitation. Only such attention to the origins of the "disease" will make prophylactic measures and a cure possible. Carlyle's biomedical metaphor pulls together a series of potent discourses used to represent crisis and to incite and manage public anxiety. The image of the diseased national body resonates with a discourse of the 'body social' emerging in early Victorian Britain,[13] and

11. Mary Poovey, *Making a Social Body: British Cultural Formation, 1830–1864* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995).

12. This influential articulation of national crisis comes from a writer and thinker who is notably Scottish. For a discussion of Carlyle's Scottishness in relation to his work, his placement in a tradition of Scottish writers as well as his contribution to the ideas of 'English literature' and 'British literature,' see Robert Crawford, *Devolving English Literature,* 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon, 2000), 134–51.

13. For a history of the emergence of the discourse of the 'social body' in nineteenth-century Britain, see Poovey, *Making a Social Body*.

echoes the rhetoric of middle- and upper-class panic about literal contagion in the 1830s, such as cholera and typhus, epidemics which were seen to emanate from working-class neighborhoods in urban centers and to contaminate Britain as a whole.[14] Carlyle also redeploys the figuration of revolutionary politics as a disease, a metaphor common in British conservative reaction to the French Revolution several decades earlier.[15] He harnesses these discourses into a systemic and holistic framework, one that would prove attractive to those writers and thinkers who wished to make the complex social, political, and economic dilemmas facing early Victorian Britain manageable through a paradigm of medical diagnosis and potential cure.[16]

While the intensification of potentially violent radical proletarian politics serves as the occasion for "Chartism" and gives the pamphlet its name,[17] Carlyle identifies a variety of problems as producing the "chimera" of national crisis—a ruling-class failure to govern the masses properly; the dominance of a laissez-faire ideology in social and economic policy in Britain; the erosion of religious, moral, and political authority within the nation; and the corruption of what Carlyle saw as a formerly effective social order.[18] He sees most of these problems as emerging from the expansion of capitalism and in particular the industrialization in Britain. Hence, the "condition of England question" rests upon a profoundly ambivalent critique of capitalism. Carlyle laments the transformation of social relations wrought by Capital; for example, he famously decries the reduction of England's social relations and class hierarchy to the "cash-nexus" and to a certain degree sees the discontent of

14. Jonathan Arac, *Commissioned Spirits: The Shaping of Social Motion in Dickens, Carlyle, Melville and Hawthorne* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), 29–30.

15. Daniel Pick describes this discourse of the French Revolution as a disease and argues that it served as an antecedent for ideas about degeneration that emerged during the nineteenth century in Europe. *Faces of Degeneration: A European Disorder, c. 1848–1918* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

16. For an excellent discussion of the relationship between rebellion and what he calls "sympathetic contagion," an analysis that connects literal contagion with counterrevolutionary politics and panic about anticolonial violence, see Gibbons, *Gaelic Gothic* 51–60.

17. The year 1839 in particular saw major acceleration of mass proletarian protest in the form of the General Convention of the Industrious Classes, which presented to Parliament a petition demanding the ratification of the Charter; the petition contained approximately 1,280,000 signatures. One of the primary debates at the Convention was the use of 'physical force' as a supplement to or even a replacement for constitutional agitation. For general history of the Chartist movement, see Asa Briggs, *Chartism* (Gloucester: Sutton, 1998); Dorothy Thompson, *Outsiders: Class, Gender, Nation* (London: Verso, 1993); and of course E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York: Vintage Books, 1966).

18. See Raymond Williams, *Culture and Society: 1780–1950* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1958); John Rosenberg, *Carlyle and the Burden of History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985); and Chris Vanden Bossche, *Carlyle and the Search for Authority* (Columbus: The Ohio State University Press, 1991).

the working classes as justified, given their exploitation as well as their living, working, and economic conditions. At the same time, his critique is committed to a capitalist vision of Progress. Ultimately, Carlyle wants to reimagine capitalist development so as to eliminate those unexpected consequences that move England to the brink of revolution. Thus, he quickly directs his attention to a particular consequence of Capital that is both integral and somehow external/foreign to the way that Capital operates in Britain, one which, if remedied, he argues, might ameliorate the destructive aspects of capitalism while preserving the economic progress to which he is dedicated. He thus calls attention to the degradation and alienation of capitalism while displacing these conditions onto another source. To return to Carlyle's original metaphor of the diseased national body, it suggests unmistakably some infection by foreign contagion, a contaminant that is not intrinsic to the nation's composition. What alien agent has penetrated England's boundaries and serves as the catalyst for national crisis?

According to Carlyle, the source of England's infection is Ireland, and the means of transmission is emigration. He names Irish immigration to Britain as "the sorest evil this country has to strive with" (*C* 138), a contagion that adulterates the body politic with working-class unrest and revolutionary potential.[19] Carlyle figures the Irish immigrant as "the ready-made nucleus of degradation and disorder" (*C* 139) who brings to Britain the misery of Irish poverty, a "degraded National character" (*C* 137), and a predisposition to "drunken violence" (*C* 138). Carlyle writes, "we have quarantines against pestilence; but there is no pestilence like that; and against it what quarantine is possible?" (*C* 139). At the close of his chapter on the English working class, he states even more boldly, "Ireland is in chronic atrophy these five centuries; the disease of nobler England, *identified now with that of Ireland,* becomes acute, has crises, and will be cured or kill" (my emphasis, *C* 144). Therefore, by tracing the discourse of disease in Carlyle's pamphlet, we see the central place of Ireland in his conservative analysis of capitalist national crisis in Britain. The immigration of Irish subjects, a dislocation produced by colonialism, introduces a "pestilence" that takes hold of a national body already weakened by forms of domestic disorder. This analysis of Ireland allows Carlyle to critique

19. Mary Poovey points out that early Victorian reports on the conditions of the poor, such as James Phillip Kay's 1832 pamphlet, "The Moral and Physical Condition of the Working Classes . . . in Manchester," not only identify Irish immigrants as the cause of cholera epidemics but also use this discourse of epidemic to represent sociopolitical unrest in Britain (58–64). Therefore, Carlyle is not the first to represent the Irish in this manner and is most likely drawing on Kay's report, which was widely disseminated and infused Whig politics with such rhetoric throughout the 1830s and 1840s (Poovey, *Making a Social Body* 56).

the condition of capitalist Britain without challenging any of its fundamental structures or its politics.

Thus, building on Chris Vanden Bossche's assertion that "Carlyle [considered] the condition of Ireland a key to understanding the condition of England,"[20] I would argue that for Carlyle, the national crisis facing Britain is a crisis of Britain's relation to Ireland. Carlyle's influential formulation of the "condition of England question" demonstrates clearly the ways in which the early Victorian emergence of a discourse of capitalist national crisis has Ireland at its center. In fact, I would suggest, the very categories of "class," the "working class," "revolution," and "nation," in a sense Capital itself and certainly "capitalist national crisis," come to be understood in relation to Ireland, in particular to the immigration of Irish subjects that began to accelerate in the decades following Union. Britain faced the first mass immigration of colonial subjects into the imperial metropole in the 1830s and 1840, a direct result of colonial policies in Ireland. Conservative panic concerning the possibility of revolution in England is inseparable from rising anxiety about the integrity of Englishness and Britishness in the face of the 'counter-colonization' by the Irish.[21] In other words, the crisis that Carlyle identifies in his apocalyptic assertion of impending national disintegration is as much a crisis of nationhood and national identity as it is a crisis of class relations.

Theorizations of Empire and the emergence of work in Postcolonial Studies over the past few decades have made it a theoretical, historical, and political commonplace to assert that British national identity and culture were constructed in very complex ways in relation to imperialist and colonialist politics as well as ideas about the colonies and colonized subjects. Following such work, this chapter asserts that, in the early Victorian period, understandings and representations of class relations and of British national identity were inextricable from discourses of Irish cultural and racial difference and specifically from debates concerning the effects of Irish immigration. If, as Carlyle argues, antagonistic class relations and Irish immigrants fracture and potentially disintegrate the national body, the condition of England question must concern itself with what forms of British nationhood will reunite and consolidate an ailing nation under siege. British nationalism—grounded in ideas about racial identity, Irish difference, Unionism, "terror," and British imperial destiny as well as a new understanding of state power—steps in

20. Vanden Bossche 127.

21. A compelling articulation of this argument can be found in Mary Hickman, *Religion, Class and Identity: The State, the Catholic Church and the Education of the Irish in Britain* (Aldershot, England: Avebury, 1995).

to serve this ideological function. Robert Young has argued that in general, "[i]n the nineteenth century, the very notion of a fixed English identity was doubtless a product of, and reaction to, the rapid change and transformation of both metropolitan and colonial societies which meant that, as with nationalism, such identities needed to be constructed to counter schisms, friction, and dissent."[22] Writing of Matthew Arnold, Young has also suggested that "[Arnoldian culture] has the supreme function of harmonizing British society, the ability to counter the disintegrating tendency of its class war and move it towards a new totality, the nation state."[23] As we shall see, several decades earlier, Carlyle devotes himself toward the same end of harmonization and unification, but culture does not serve as the primary mode for achieving this end. Instead, "Chartism" articulates a vision of Britishness rooted in racism, one that distinguishes his nation (sometimes identified as English, sometimes as British)[24] from Ireland, the colony that most immediately threatened Britain's integrity. For Carlyle, the fulfillment of this national identity and destiny requires as its material and ideological agent an aggressive imperial state that takes the structure of the "United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland" as its model for domestic security and global domination.

In order to understand Carlyle's elaboration of the "condition of England" as inextricable from the Irish question, we must read it as emerging from a particular historical conjuncture that determined the discourse of capitalist national crisis. To begin, the most pressing symptoms of the national disease about which Carlyle writes are the many forms of working-class discontent and politicization that appeared in Britain throughout the 1830s and 1840s; in fact, Chartism, the largest and most organized form of working-class protest during these decades, gives Carlyle's pamphlet its name. For the middle classes and aristocracy, Chartism was the most threatening progressive organization of the class struggle yet witnessed. With their demands, described by Chartist leader Bronterre O'Brien as "the five cardinal points of Radicalism, viz: universal suffrage, equal representation, annual parliaments, vote by ballot, and no property qualification for members,"[25] by 1839 Chartists posed a

22. *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 3–4.

23. Ibid. 56.

24. Young also makes the important point that "in terms of power relations there is no difference between them [the terms 'British' and 'English']: 'British' is the name imposed by the English on the non-English." I attribute Carlyle's slippage to this "metonymic extension of English dominance over the other kingdoms" (ibid. 3).

25. "Bronterre O'Brien's Account of the Radical Meeting at the Crown and Anchor, 28 February 1837," originally published in the *London Mercury,* March 4, 1837, reprinted in Dorothy Thompson, *The Early Chartists* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1971), 57.

formidable threat to the political, economic, and social stability of Great Britain. Throughout the 1830s, large radical organizations had been established (such as the London Workingmen's Association, National Union of the Working Classes, the National Radical Association of Scotland, and the Birmingham Political Union); strikes, demonstrations, and mass meetings occurred across Great Britain; and several radical newspapers such as the *Northern Star* were founded and widely circulated. After an enormous general convention of the Industrious Classes in London in 1839, a petition supporting the People's Charter containing well over 1 million signatures was presented to Parliament. The danger of a violent split between the 'two nations'[26] contained within Great Britain seemed real and immediate by the time of the publication of "Chartism." For Carlyle and others, a clear, unifying vision of national identity and destiny might provide the only hope for suturing together and eventually consolidating what seemed a hopelessly divided nation. It is crucial to recognize that the "condition of England question" is grounded in concern about the eruption of violent proletarian protest, violence that signaled for Carlyle the spread of the "terror" of Jacobinism to Britain.

Yet, we must also read Carlyle's "condition of England question" as emerging from a crisis[27] that began with the Act of Union of 1800 and then intensified after Catholic Emancipation in 1829. As I have described in the introduction, the Act of Union of 1800 refashioned the British nation, creating a new entity, 'the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland,' by incorporating a colony into the imperial nation. This incorporation rendered the Irish within the new United Kingdom indecipherable in relation to questions of national belonging, making them an internal yet persistently foreign

26. This common phrase, which was used to describe the dramatic fracture that class produced in early Victorian Britain, is most often associated with Disraeli, who used it as the subtitle for his 1845 novel, *Sybil.* However, it is interesting to note that Kathleen Tillotson emphasizes Carlyle's influence on Disraeli and, quoting *Sartor Resartus,* writes that Carlyle "expressed the idea of the 'two nations' twelve years before Disraeli: 'two Sects will one day part England between them'; 'two contradictory, uncommunicating masses.'" *Novels of the Eighteen Forties* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1954), 82.

27. Here I am relying on Stuart Hall's definition of crisis. In his generative reading of Gramsci, Hall asserts that it is necessary "to distinguish between 'organic' historical movements, which are destined to penetrate deep into society and to be relatively long-lasting, from more 'occasional, immediate, almost accidental movements.' In this respect, Gramsci reminds us that a crisis, if it is organic, can last for decades. It is not a static phenomenon but rather, one marked by constant movement, polemics, contestation, etc., which represent the attempt by different sides to overcome or resolve the crisis and to do so in terms which favour their long term hegemony." "Gramsci's Relevance for the Study of Race and Ethnicity," in *Stuart Hall: Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 422. Therefore, using this definition, I would argue that the multifaceted crisis that I describe as the context for reading Carlyle lasts throughout the 1830s and 1840s rather than appearing as an 'immediate,' relatively brief crisis.

population just as Carlyle's biological language describes them. This vexing relationship between British and Irish national identity only intensified with increasing Irish immigration to Britain after the ratification of the Act of Union. Even before a flood of immigrants arrived in Britain during the great famines of the mid-1840s, what Kerby Miller calls "the prefamine exodus"[28] began when a steady stream of Irish entered Britain as permanent emigrants or seasonal migrants looking for work.[29] By 1841, just two years after the publication of "Chartism," the British census recorded more than 415 thousand Irish in England and Scotland, a figure that did not include seasonal laborers and the children of earlier emigrants.[30] This Irish presence provoked widely disseminated xenophobic discourses concerning the influence of these immigrants, particularly their effect on English national identity and on the English working class and their politicization.[31] Such a backlash was exacerbated by the appearance of a demand for Repeal of the Act of Union on many Chartist platforms, some alliances between Irish nationalists and working-class radicals, and the seemingly prominent role of the Irish in the most radical Chartist politics, which had begun to advocate physical force as a legitimate tactic of political struggle.[32]

We must consider one other aspect of the historical moment in which Carlyle writes. Stuart Hall has defined modern crisis as periods during which the capitalist means of production cannot reproduce itself without significant transformation.[33] Hall's definition allows us to gain a more complex

28. *Emigrants and Exiles: Ireland and the Exodus to North America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 1.

29. For an excellent history of Irish migration to Britain before the famines of 1846–48, see Ruth-Ann M. Harris, *The Nearest Place That Wasn't Ireland: Early Nineteenth Century Irish Labor Migration* (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1994).

30. T. W. Freeman, "Land and People, c. 1841," in *A New History of Ireland,* vol. 5, *Ireland under the Union 1801–1870,* ed. W. E. Vaughan (Oxford: Clarendon, 1989), 242–71.

31. Historians of Irish immigration to Britain have engaged in extensive debate about the existence and pervasiveness of anti-Irish xenophobia and racism in Britain. In particular, Sheridan Gilley has argued that most British stereotypes about the Irish during the nineteenth century were "national not racial." However, Gilley's rejection of anti-Irish prejudice as racism is grounded in large part in his own racism; he writes, "Unlike Anglo-Saxons and Celts, Caucasian and Negroes are in fact different races, defined by objective physical characteristics, most notably skin color." "English Attitudes to the Irish, 1780–1900," in *Immigrants and Minorities in British Society,* ed. Colin Holmes (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1978), 85 and 90. This chapter rejects his assumption that race is an objective biological difference rather than a socially constructed category of identification that is historically contingent and may rely on criteria of identification other than skin color.

32. Dorothy Thompson provides a compelling account of the role of the Irish in Chartist politics in "Ireland and the Irish in English Radicalism before 1850," *Outsiders* 103–33. See also John Belchem's account of British reactionary response to the role of the Irish in Chartism in *Popular Radicalism in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (New York: St. Martin's, 1996), 90–93.

33. *The Hard Road to Renewal: Thatcherism and the Crisis of the Left* (London: Verso, 1988), 98.

understanding of Irish immigration to Britain during the 1830s. The national integrity of Britain was threatened not just by a form of colonial domination that ruptured and reorganized the nation's boundaries, but by the capitalist mode of production's ever-increasing demand for surplus labor. The continued expansion of British industrialization demanded and attracted a reserve army of labor from the feudalized periphery of the newly created United Kingdom.[34] Post-Union economic decline in Ireland created the material conditions necessary to allow continued capitalist development in Britain.[35] Thus, not only did Union serve as a form of colonial control that dissolved national boundaries and threatened the nation's stability and self-conception, but the capitalist mode of production required this same crossing and confounding of boundaries in the form of the immigration and migration of Irish laborers.

Stuart Hall has described this process as a "tension between the tendency of capitalism to develop the nation-state and national cultures, and its transnational imperatives . . . a contradiction at the heart of modernity."[36] Applying Hall's formulation to the Act of Union and subsequent immigration, it becomes clear that for us, as for Carlyle, Irish immigration during the 1830s and 1840s serves as the lens that allows us to bring into focus an extended national crisis precipitated by the conjoined projects of colonialism and capitalist expansion. The English working class became the doubly vulnerable site of permeability and instability; Union dismantled the national boundaries that separated the British proletariat and Irish subjects, while capitalist production demanded that the British working class absorb surplus population, perceived as racially other and inherently insurrectionary, into the nation as necessary labor-power. Since Carlyle contends that "[t]he condition of the great body of people in the country is the condition of the country itself" (*C* 5), this proletarian instability reflects the instability of the British nation as a whole.

From the start of "Chartism," Carlyle sets up the "condition of England question" as a political alternative to legislative remedies to the crisis that he is diagnosing. For example, Carlyle takes aim at the New Poor Law of 1834, which restricted state benefits and outdoor relief to wage laborers. He argues this new Poor Law does not address the underlying causes of the crisis evi-

34. Eric Hobsbawm describes the role of the Irish as a "reserve army" of unskilled labor that provided British industry with the capital of a "mobile vanguard" of labor. *Industry and Empire: From 1750 to the Present* (London: Penguin, 1970), 309–12.

35. Marx provides a striking description of this process in the chapter "The Working Day," in *Capital,* vol. 1, 340–416.

36. "Our Mongrel Selves," *New Statesman and Society,* June 19, 1992, 6.

denced by Chartism; for example, it does not take account of the problem of unemployment and rests on the assumption that work is available for the English proletariat. He also rejects statistical inquiry as incapable of indicating the "essence" of the present crisis. However, statistics do provide one numerical figure that is relevant to the "condition of England question," one that causes the unemployment that he deplores—the impact of Ireland, the source of workers who overwhelm and destabilize the labor market. Carlyle declares:

> [t]here is one fact which Statistical Science has communicated, and a most astonishing one; the inference of which is pregnant as to this matter. Ireland has near seven millions of working people, the third unit of whom, it appears by Statistical Science, has not for thirty weeks each year as many third-rate potatoes as will suffice him. It is a fact perhaps the most eloquent that was ever written down in any language, at any date of the world's history. (*C* 25)

This hyperbolic passage insists upon the momentous global importance of Irish economic decline. The enormously significant "fact" of Ireland's condition is "pregnant" in relation to the "condition of England question"; this use of reproductive language throws into relief the Malthusian underpinnings of Carlyle's analysis. The evocation of overpopulation and of millions of starving, indolent bodies across the Irish Sea inaugurates Carlyle's apocalyptic vision of the "condition of England question" and possible destruction of the English nation by Ireland. If the expansion and development of the capitalist mode of production causes the demoralization of British workers, Irish immigrants are the primary catalyst for this process.

At first, the statistical "fact" of Irish overpopulation and poverty has a complex status in Carlyle's vision of capitalist national crisis. Early in "Chartism," he offers an analysis of the pauperization of Ireland that in fact seems to critique British rule.[37] However, as we will see, Carlyle's pamphlet is fundamentally a gospel of Empire,[38] as Saxon imperialist nationalism serves to

37. This seeming critique of British colonialism made Carlyle's work attractive to some Irish nationalists who imagined him sympathetic to their anticolonial cause. For a firsthand account of the relationship between Thomas Carlyle and the young radical nationalists who formed Young Ireland in the 1840s, see Charles Gavan Duffy, *Conversations with Carlyle* (London: Sampson Low, Marston and Company, 1892). For a recent account of the relationship between Carlyle and Young Ireland, see Julie M. Dugger, "Black Ireland's Race: Thomas Carlyle and the Young Ireland Movement," *Victorian Studies* 48, no. 3 (Spring 2006): 461–85.

38. John B. Lamb, "Carlyle's 'Chartism,' the Rhetoric of Revolution, and the Dream of Empire," *Victorians Institute Journal* 23 (1995): 129–50.

consolidate a fractured, potentially violent proletariat. He critiques not colonialism itself, but the forms that it has taken in Ireland that have led to the immigration of poor Irish subjects to Britain. Yet, the infection of England with Ireland's disease is not reducible to poor colonial management or, as we will see, to historical contingency alone. Rather, Carlyle engages in a painstaking elaboration of "Irish national character" (*C* 137) as that which permeates Britain and courses through the nation's body as a degenerative infectious agent.

Thus, Carlyle's understanding of capitalist national crisis involves a displacement of the accelerating expropriation and misery of Capital onto the bodies of the Irish, in particular the axial figure of the immigrant. The Irish immigrant functions as a cipher through which to understand Chartism and through which to resuscitate capitalism and the nation from its self-generated demise. In order for this project to succeed, Irish immigration must be severed from the historical processes that produced it—capitalism itself, hundreds of years of colonial rule in Ireland, and the Act of Union of 1800. Rather, the Irish body itself is recast as essentially barbaric, as containing the forces of degeneration that are transmitted and then released through immigration. Carlyle contends that Irish bodies contain within them criminality, treachery, anarchy, and dishonesty, a total alienation from "the truth," qualities produced by race, culture, and history (*C* 137). Most important perhaps is the association of the Irish with an innate violence, one that is cast as the origin of the violence of class conflict. "Savagery" has taken a biological hold in each Irish body, encoded and carried in blood, until the disorder "circulates through every vein, of [the people]" (*C* 137) not only alien to Englishness but a terrifying, irreversible inversion of British civilization. At the same time, those Irish bodies so full of savagery are also described as utterly empty, become a "nothing" (*C* 137), a kind of living vacuum devoid of civilization. It is this status as a no-thing that makes Irish immigrants such a destructive economic and social force. In relation to Britain, each Irish subject is a "Sanspotatoe" (*C* 28), a lack who looks to consume that which has been denied him or her.

This Carlylean vision of Irishness, which I will show is an influential one, is most clearly articulated in the "wild Milesian" passage of "Chartism." Here the "condition of England question" reveals itself as a kind of racial hysteria. Carlyle writes:

> But the thing we had to state here was our inference from that mournful fact of the third Sanspotatoe,—coupled with this other well-known fact that the Irish speak a partially intelligible dialect of English, and their fare across by

> steam is four-pence sterling! Crowds of miserable Irish darken all our towns. The wild Milesian features, looking false ingenuity, restlessness, unreason, misery and mockery, salute you on all highways and byways. The English coachman, as he whirls past, lashes the Milesian with his whip, curses him with his tongue; the Milesian is holding out his hat to beg. He is the sorest evil this country has to strive with. In his rags and laughing savagery, he is there to undertake all work that can be done by mere strength of hand and back; for wages that will purchase him potatoes. He needs only salt for condiment; he lodges to his mind in any pighutch or doghutch, roosts in outhouses; and wears a suit of tatters, the getting on and off of which is said to be a difficult operation, transacted only in festivals and the hightides of the calendar. The Saxon man if he cannot find work on these terms, finds no work. He too may be ignorant; but he has not sunk from decent manhood to squalid apehood. . . . (*C* 139)

This passage lays out some of the most important contours of the racist anti-immigrant politics central to the "condition of England question." The Irish immigrant is named as "the sorest evil that this country has to strive with," signaling his (gendered male) identification as the source of capitalist national crisis. The figure of the Milesian becomes the synecdoche for the disease of Irishness carried by immigrant bodies into Britain's national body. Carlyle represents the process of infection as a literal and metaphoric "darkening" of Britain's industrial centers. The word "darken" implies the effects of the unsanitary living habits that Carlyle associates with the Irish, the "filth" of Irish working-class ghettoes that sully English and Scottish cities and therefore "darken" that nation as a whole. The problem of sanitation also mirrors and becomes a metaphor for the cultural and racial pollution of Britain by Irish bodies, an overall process of national degeneration generated by the Irish presence. Notably, Carlyle identifies the sites of contamination as "our" urban centers, employing the first-person plural to consolidate British national belonging in the face of an Irish invasion.

By representing the "Milesian" as a roadside beggar, Carlyle highlights the economic effects of Irish immigration. He suggests that the Milesian exists as an economic parasite who is willing to perform unskilled labor for wages below the British national standard, thereby transforming labor relations in Britain. Despite Britain's attempts to fend off the Milesian with violence, he effects a degeneration of the national economy produced by falling wages, increased unemployment, and a growth in the proportion of the working class who either entered state-sponsored workhouses or became indigent. The

"wild Milesian" also possesses the attributes of long-standing stereotypes of Irish national and racial character that are redeployed by Carlyle in his elaboration of capitalist national crisis. Thus, the disease of Irishness is defined through a repertoire of recognizable markers of Irish difference.[39] The Milesian becomes the locus of irrationality and "laughing savagery." By changing his suit of tatters only "in festivals and the hightides of the calendar," Carlyle associates him with ideas about Irish superstition and Catholic idolatry. While Carlyle writes little of Irish Catholicism in "Chartism," this image makes clear the way that Roman Catholic religious practices serve as evidence of Irish barbarity.[40] Long-standing anti-Catholicism is thus recruited into the service of anti-Irish racism, religious practice serving as a expression of savagery.[41] Anarchic domesticity also expresses Irish difference, as living conditions and even food sources form what Anne McClintock calls an "iconography of domestic degeneracy."[42]

It is important that Carlyle's "Milesian" also reinforces the association of the Irish with criminality and "drunken violence." Here Carlyle makes use of a tradition that imagines the 'natural' Irish temperament as unstable, violent, and unpredictable.[43] In an 1834 travel narrative published several years before "Chartism," Henry Inglis, a close friend and correspondent of Carlyle's throughout the 1830s, wrote that for the English, "[t]he very name [Ireland] forces to our recollection images of shillelaghs, and broken heads, and turbulence of every kind."[44] Inglis claims that, in a British popular imaginary, Ireland is synonymous with violence in many forms. This statement exemplifies the way in which resistance to colonial domination was depoliticized and translated into "irrational" violence produced by the essential instability

39. Explorations of these long-standing stereotypes can be found in Luke Gibbons, "Race against Time: Racial Discourse and Irish History," in *Transformations in Irish Culture* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1996) and Seamus Deane, "Civilians and Barbarians," in *Ireland's Field Day* (London: Hutchinson, 1985), 33–42.

40. For more on the history of British anti-Catholicism in relation to Ireland, see Hickman 19–57.

41. This analysis is in keeping with Mary Hickman's suggestion that in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, "[r]arely were the defects of the Irish character portrayed as the consequence of Catholicism itself, rather the Irish refusal to embrace Protestantism was due to the debased character of the Celt . . . " (ibid. 27).

42. Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 53.

43. For extensive work on this construction of the Irish temperament as inherently unstable, see Deane, "Civilians and Barbarians"; Hickman; and Joep Leerson, *Remembrance and Imagination: Patterns in the Historical and Literary Representation of Ireland in the Nineteenth Century* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1997).

44. Cited in Richard Ned Lebow, *White Britain and Black Ireland: The Influence of Stereotypes on Colonial Policy* (Philadelphia: Institute for the Study of Human Issues, 1976), 53.

and criminality of the Irish. Through the prism of racialization, this violence is abstracted into general "turbulence." One stereotype in which this Irish predisposition to violence was embodied was the "sudden murder," a criminal act that was encoded as integral to Irish culture just like the "shillelaghs" of which Inglis writes.[45] This racial stereotype was also posited as the expression of an inherent insanity: "emotional instability, mental disequilibrium, or dualistic temperament."[46] So in the "wild Milesian," Carlyle both racializes Irish violence and performs what Michel Foucault calls "the psychiatrization of criminal danger,"[47] positing a national predisposition to criminal insanity that is only exacerbated by the uncontrolled consumption of alcohol, the "liquid madness" of the Irish (*C* 144).

The Milesian passage suggests two primary markers of Irish difference. They express Irish national character in legible form and allow for the identification of Irish immigrants despite the absence of what Frantz Fanon called an "epidermal schema" of race. Carlyle first identifies the "partially intelligible dialect of English" spoken by the Irish as an emblem of their barbarism. Language, accent, and a supposed inability to master the English language inscribe Irish bodies circulating throughout Britain with an audible difference that ensures their detectability and that therefore differentiates them from the British working class.[48] These linguistic markers also signify the inassimilability of the Irish to English culture and the failure of a long-standing project of cultural imperialism.

Carlyle supplements this linguistic difference with an insistence on visual, corporeal markers of Irishness. Halfway through the Milesian passage, he shifts his narrative into the second person; readers are exhorted to scrutinize proletarian faces and to discover in them the imagined signs of mass Irish

45. Ibid. 48.

46. Curtis, L. P. *Apes and Angels: The Irishman in Victorian Caricature,* rev. ed. (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institute Press, 1997), 51.

47. Foucault identifies this process as beginning during the first three decades of the nineteenth century in Europe, the period during which Carlyle is writing. It is worth noting the relevance of Foucault's analysis of the "dangerous individual," a concept that emerges from "a knowledge-system capable of characterizing a criminal individual in himself [*sic*] and in a sense beneath his acts; a knowledge-system able to measure the index of danger present in an individual . . . [and] which might establish the protection necessary in the face of such a danger" (144). Foucault describes the idea of the "dangerous individual" as part of a discourse of degeneration and also as emerging from a transition in which "[t]he social 'body' ceased to be a metaphor and became a biological reality and a field for medical intervention" (134). Building upon this genealogy, Carlyle seems to participate in the formation of the medico-juridical concept of the "dangerous individual" and to identify Irish immigrants as such. "The Dangerous Individual," in *Politics, Philosophy, Culture: Interviews and Other Writings, 1977–1984,* ed. Lawrence D. Kritzman (New York: Routledge, 1988), 125–51.

48. See Clair Wills, "Language Politics, Narrative, Political Violence," *Oxford University Review* 13, nos. 1–2 (1991): 53.

immigration. He informs his reader that "*wild Milesian features*, looking false ingenuity, restlessness, misery, and mockery, *salute you* on all highways and byways" (my emphases, *C* 138). Irish difference operates in a visual economy; physiognomy "salutes" those who witness it, making the identification of Irishness possible by reading the inscription of barbaric attributes onto the very features of immigrants. At the same time, Carlyle never describes the distinctive physical features of the Milesian, leaving the reader in the throes of a scopic drive to discern national character in the faces of passersby. Like the symptoms of the diseased national body that require scrutiny, the faces of the working class must be read constantly for signs of racial difference that they may express.

Carlyle's complex representation of the "wild Milesian" reveals that his understanding of Irishness in 1839 exists at the crossroads of two discourses. At the start of "Chartism," Carlyle claims that Irish national character has been created by historical conditions, centuries of poverty and misrule that led to the degradation of the people as a whole. As we have seen, this difference has solidified into a permanent identity that cannot be reversed simply by altering historical circumstances; degeneration has created a kind of sedimentation of barbarism, which is contained in and expressed upon the surface of Irish bodies. Therefore, Carlyle's construction of Irishness contains a racialist and racist dimension, but one that constructs race as a mutable biological identity forged by historical conditions. This logic is in keeping with Etienne Balibar's suggestion that, while the distinction between cultural racism and biological racism can be a useful tool of analysis, it is important to remember that "culture can also function like a nature, and it can in particular function as a way of locking individuals and groups a priori into a genealogy, into a determination that is immutable and intangible in origins."[49] Indeed, in the case of Carlyle, cultural racism figures history as an agent that transforms culture into nature.

This racial imaginary then ineluctably slides into and becomes inextricable from a discourse on racial genealogy, one that implies an immutable ancient basis for the national character of the Irish. For, as Carlyle's descriptive term "Milesian" suggests, he imagines Irishness as originating from racial descent as well as historical conditions. Throughout the nineteenth century, the term "Milesian" signified a racial mythology that traced the origins of the Irish people to ancestors in Egypt and Spain who eventually settled in Ireland.[50]

49. Etienne Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein, *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities* (London: Verso, 1988), 23.

50. See Seamus MacManus, *The Story of the Irish Race: A Popular History of Ireland* (New York:

This genealogy was widely disseminated in the works of the Scottish scholar James MacPherson, texts with which Carlyle was certainly familiar. When Carlyle invokes this account of racial origins, he differentiates the genealogy of the Irish people from the English who can claim an Anglo-Saxon heritage that, later in "Chartism," becomes critical to Carlyle in his mythus of Empire as Britain's national and racial destiny. Therefore, the Irish difference of which he writes is simultaneously the result of a historically contingent process of degeneration and of racial descent; it is expressed in an articulation of cultural racism and biological, naturalized racism.

Hence, the transformation of Britain occasioned by the Act of Union, industrialization, and subsequent immigration is not only economic, cultural, and political, but ultimately racial. Carlyle imagines that a blood transfusion of sorts has taken place, and the anarchy that is Irishness circulates through the veins of Britain's national body. Following the depiction of the wild Milesian, he describes this process as an invasion:

> American forests lie untilled across the ocean; the uncivilized Irishman, not by his strength but by the opposite of strength, drives out the Saxon native, takes possession in his room. There abides he, in his squalor and unreason, in his falsity and drunken violence, as the ready-made nucleus of degradation and disorder. . . . This soil of Britain, these Saxon men have cleared it, made it arable, fertile, and a home for them; they and their fathers have done that. Under the sky there exists no force of men who with arms in their hands could drive them out of it; all force of men with arms these Saxons would seize, in their grim way, and fling (Heaven's justice and their own Saxon humour aiding them) swiftly into the sea. But behold, a force of men armed only with rags, ignorance and nakedness; and the Saxon owners, paralysed by invisible magic of paper formula, have to fly far, and hide themselves in Transatlantic forests. (*C* 139)

Notably the inability to address adequately this invasion and its consequences stems, according to Carlyle, from a kind of paralysis produced by "invisible magic of paper formula." This vague reference to the legal framework from which British national crisis emerges alludes to several legislative transformations that occurred in the first decades of the nineteenth century. Carlyle might refer to the Act of Union itself, but in addition, conjures the Reform Bill of 1832 and the 1832 Poor Law, parliamentary acts that he saw

Devin-Adair, 1944). According to the *OED,* this mythological genealogy was first noted in Spenser's *State of Ireland.*

as addressing inadequately the discontent of the working classes and subsequent national crisis. Carlyle conflates these laws into a generalized rejection of British "paper formula." These laws are not only impotent to address the underlying problems that produce the "condition of England question" but actually exacerbate Chartism by ignoring its essence.

In this passage, Carlyle anticipates the cure for the condition of England question that he presents at the close of "Chartism"—the global emigration of surplus British workers as the agents of Britain's imperial destiny. Irish immigration to Britain is the unfortunate circumstance that makes the emigration of the British working classes necessary. In a reworking of colonial discourse, standard iconography of the engulfment of new territories and their subsequent cultural, social, and political regeneration is inverted into a dystopic narrative of the countercolonization of Britain. Once the British state absorbs Ireland into the United Kingdom and Irish immigrants begin to enter Britain, the fantasy of *the civilizing mission,* of the march of progress through the spread of English government and culture around the globe, is replaced by a reverse trajectory. Two racially distinct, masculine nations—'the Saxon men' and 'the uncivilized Irishman'—struggle to occupy Britain. As is apparent, Carlyle identifies the Irish immigrant as male and as the bearer of an anarchic inefficient masculinity that stands in opposition to the stolid "Saxon manfulness" of British subjects. In both instances, the male working-class body becomes the metonym for national identity. As the militarized might of the Saxons fails, they are subsumed by "a force of men armed only with rags, ignorance, and nakedness" who stand as the phantasmatic antithesis of Britishness. We see a paranoid fantasy in which colonial violence is turned against the imperial center, which is then engulfed and its national subjects expelled. The British nation is now colonized by the savagery it was destined to civilize, and the eviction of the working class from Britain indicates that this unimaginable conquest is almost complete.[51]

Indeed, in the fourth chapter of "Chartism," the reader discovers that the "finest peasantry in the world" refers not to England's working class, but ironically to Irish immigrants who are "streaming in on us daily" (*C* 141). In the end, capitalist expansion allows England to be consumed by her dangerous colony, and "Ireland, now for the first time, in such strange circuitous way, does find itself embarked in the same boat with England, to sail together, or to sink together; the wretchedness of Ireland, slowly but inevitably, has crept over to us and become our own wretchedness" (*C* 140).

51. It is difficult to miss the irony of Carlyle's narrative in which British citizens are "evicted" by Irish immigrants. The evictions that typified the settlement of Ireland and other colonies are transplanted and replayed on British soil in yet another inversion of imperial destiny.

Victorian respondents to "Chartism" as well as contemporary scholars have criticized the pamphlet for its lack of any proposed solutions for the disease that Carlyle so extensively diagnoses.[52] Indeed, Carlyle does not seem to offer any suggestions for remedying the crisis produced by post-Union Irish immigration. He ends his pamphlet with two vague propositions—education of the working class[53] and emigration of the British working classes in the service of imperialist expansion. While Carlyle barely mentions the "wild Milesian" when suggesting these measures, it is possible that, like other politicians and commentators of the 1830s who imagined schemes of resettling the Irish in the New World,[54] he had hopes for directing the "Third Sanspotatoe" to the colonies rather than Britain. He gestures to this solution when he mentions the "American forests [that] lie untilled" while Irish immigrants flood a nation that lacks the employment they seek. Still, no more explicit reference is made to government-subsidized plans for Irish immigrants.

Perhaps to look for such concrete propositions in Carlyle's pamphlet is beside the point, however. Instead, what is most important about "Chartism" is less the suggestion of any palliative measure than the text's transformation of the discourse that articulates British capitalist national crisis, and by extension both nationalism and national identity. By disseminating an anti-immigrant politics and ideas of Irish racial difference in 1839, Carlyle's analysis of Irish immigration itself serves as a kind of solution for the "condition of England question." In his essay, "Class Racism," Etienne Balibar writes suggestively of a transformation in nationalist ideology that begins in early Victorian Britain:

> [Disraeli] indicates the path which might be taken by the dominant classes when confronted with the progressive organization of the class struggle: first divide the mass of the 'poor' . . . then progressively displace the markers of dangerousness and heredity from the 'labouring classes' as a whole on to for-

52. For example, see Vanden Bossche 96.

53. While Williams sees Carlyle's call for education of the working class as an important progressive thread running throughout "Chartism," my own understanding of this proposition is in agreement with David Lloyd and Paul Thomas's critique of Williams. They argue that many of bourgeois and some proletarian calls for the education of the working classes must be understood as part of the emergence of the ethical state in the Victorian era, serving the ideological function of forming working-class subjects into docile citizens. They write, "Educating the poor was not just a Victorian philanthropic obsession. It merits reading as an ideology, since it served at once as a means (and often as *the* means) to shelving dangerous political reforms, and at the same time, operated as an important mechanism of social control." *Culture and the State* (New York: Routledge, 1998), 98.

54. For historical accounts of such schemes of emigration designed to relieve conditions in Ireland believed to be caused by overpopulation, see H. J. M. Johnston, *British Emigration Policy 1815–1830: "Shovelling Out Paupers"* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1972) and D. Fitzpatrick, *Irish Emigration 1801–1921,* 3rd ed. (Dublin: Economic and Social History Society of Ireland, 1990).

> eigners, and in particular immigrants and colonial subjects, at the same time as the introduction of universal suffrage is moving the boundary line between 'citizens' and 'subjects' to the frontiers of nationality.[55]

Carlyle's influential anti-Irish politics participates in just the displacement that Balibar describes. The phantasmatic figure of the "wild Milesian" and the terrifying image of the imperial nation colonized by "savage" immigrants—these Carlylean discourses perform the exclusion and expulsion of those who are simultaneously "foreigners . . . immigrants and colonial subjects."

In other words, Carlyle's racist anti-immigrant politics serves several critical functions. It postulates a consolidating vision of British national identity that synthesizes the working classes with the rest of Britain through the marginalization of Irish subjects. This nationalist politics renders unnecessary even the extension of suffrage, a Chartist demand but also a legislative possibility raised by the limited yet significant Reform Act of 1832. This emerging form of British nationalism offers a symbolic share in a coherent, unified national identity as a compensatory substitute for and a displacement of the rights of universal citizenship as envisioned by working-class radicals. In the face of the historical crises precipitated by Union, industrialization, and large-scale immigration, Carlyle relies on the discourse of race to redraw the boundary lines of nationality and to subordinate the potentially revolutionary difference of class to the difference between citizens and colonial subjects, between British and Irish, between Saxon and Milesian Celt. Therefore, I would argue that anti-Irish racism and the British nationalism with which it is imbricated serve as two of the primary ideological agents through which the British working class is hegemonized and through which the British nation is mobilized as an imagined racial unity with a common imperial destiny.

Indeed, a significant portion of "Chartism" is devoted to the imagining of a Saxon nationalism that is grounded in Empire. Claiming only to cite an imaginary text titled "History of the Teuton Kindred" or "Geschichte der Teutschen Sippschaft" by Herr Sauerteig (*C* 171), Carlyle provides a national history that is simultaneously a racial genealogy, one that traces the Germanic or Teutonic origins of the British people. This Anglo-Saxonist[56] nationalism

55. Balibar and Wallerstein 210.

56. George Stocking describes the discourse of Anglo-Saxonism succinctly: "Anglo-Saxonism was part of a broader tradition of European thought that validated national, religious, or class interests by linking them with specific populations of the early medieval period . . . [and by the early Victorian period] Anglo-Saxonism had begun to take on a more distinctly racial meaning, with the emphasis less on Saxon resistance to the Norman yoke than on the common Teutonic origin that

figures the first Saxon settlers as originary colonists who established the British nation, thus figuring Britishness as colonialist and imperialist in its cultural, historical, and racial essence. He writes:

> Who shall say what work and works this England has yet to do? For what purpose this land of Britain was created, set like a jewel in the encircling blue of Ocean; and this tribe of Saxons, fashioned in the depths of Time, "on the shores of the Black Sea" or elsewhere, "out of the Harzgebirge rock" or whatever other material, was sent travelling hitherward? No man can say: it was for a work, and for works, incapable of announcement of words. Thou seest them there; part of them stand done, and visible to the eye; even these thou canst not *name:* how much less the others still matter of prophecy only!—They live and labour there, these twenty million Saxon men; they have been born into this mystery of life out of the darkness of Past Time:—how changed now since the first Father and first Mother of them set forth, quitting the Tribe of *Theuth,* with passionate farewell, under questionable auspices; on scanty bullock-cart, if they had even bullocks and a cart; with axe and hunting spear, to subdue a portion of our common Planet! This Nation now has cities and seedfields, has spring-vans, dray-waggons, Long-acre carriages, nay railway trains; has coined money, exchange-bills, laws, books, war-fleets, spinning-jennies, warehouses, and West-India docks: see what it has built and done, what it can and will yet build and do! . . . How many brawny arms, generation after generation, sank down wearied; how many noble hearts, toiling while life lasted, and wise heads that wore themselves dim with scanning and discerning, before this waste *Whitecliff,* Albion so-called, with its other Cassiterides *Tin Islands,* became a BRITISH EMPIRE! (original emphases, *C* 70–71)

Carlyle specifies that the Saxon settlers secure their double destiny as imperialists and capitalists by colonizing the space that will be Britain through the displacement of the Celt. He engages in an "obsessional quest for a core

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separated all Englishmen from their Celtic neighbors. . . . Anglo-Saxonism did more than define the positive content of national identity. The enterprising, liberty-loving Saxon, self-reliant and self-controlled, who had for some time been juxtaposed against the impulsive, imaginative, violent, and somewhat childish Celt, was now on a broader stage contrasted with the savages of the non-Western world, in whom the Celtic character was painted with a darker brush." *Victorian Anthropology* (New York: Free Press, 1987), 62. Thomas Arnold was the main proponent of Anglo-Saxonism in early and mid-Victorian Britain. For biographical documentation of the intellectual and personal relationship between Carlyle and Thomas Arnold, see Fred Kaplan, *Thomas Carlyle: A Biography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 288 and 295, and Heffer 200 and 220. For a discussion of Thomas Arnold's Anglo-Saxonism and his argument that the "English race is the German race," see Young, *Colonial Desire* 67.

of authenticity"[57] that is completely homogeneous. While Anglo-Saxonist Thomas Arnold and many of his contemporaries believed that the more vital element in British racial identity was Teutonic, they allowed for some history of racial mixing with Celtic inhabitants of medieval Britain and with Norman nobility.[58] Through the voice of Sauerteig, Carlyle rejects these other narratives of Britain's founding, engaging in what Joep Leerson calls an act of historiographical "ethnic cleansing" which recognizes only Saxon ancestry.[59] I would argue that, for Carlyle, this refiguring of the British nation, its history, and the identity of its people is a cure for the disease that he identifies at the start of the pamphlet. In several ways, Sauerteig's vision of Saxon national community provides an effective ideological prophylactic that might prevent a revolution of the working classes in Britain. In *Empire,* Hardt and Negri describe this division of the proletariat who were led to believe that "their interests were tied exclusively to their national identity and imperial destiny."[60] As the passage above demonstrates, this history naturalizes both imperialism and capitalism as the inevitable telos of Britain. Carlyle secures cross-class participation in this destiny by insisting upon the common racial descent of all classes of British subjects; the 'people' who constitute the nation are racially homogeneous, a form of identity that subsumes all other axes of identification. This national identity binds a nation fractured by class conflict by naturalizing economic differences as the conditions of possibility for Britain's destiny and subordinating class difference to an ideology of racial purity.[61]

This imperialist nationalism combines with the anti-Irish racism that runs throughout "Chartism." The Celt or "wild Milesian" has been conquered as part of the inevitable progression of British history and continues to serve as the spectral Other against which "Saxon manfulness" is constructed. These two discourses—Carlylean British nationalism and anti-Irish racism—

57. Balibar, "Racism and Nationalism" 60.

58. For an interesting quote from Thomas Arnold's 1841 Inaugural Lecture at Oxford that speaks to exactly this vision of the mixture at work in English identity, see Young, *Colonial Desire* 67. For more on these debates among Anglo-Saxonist scholars, see H. A. MacDougall, *Racial Myth in English History: Trojans, Teutons, and Anglo-Saxons* (Hanover, NH: Dartmouth Press, 1972).

59. Leerson, *Remembrance and Imagination* 96.

60. Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), 42–43.

61. My reading here is at odds with Raymond Williams's assessment of Carlyle's "Chartism" as containing within it a critique of capitalism and the need to reform "the social and human relationships hitherto dictated by the 'laws' of political economy" (*Culture and Society* 82). I would argue that Carlyle's critique of human relations structured by "the cash-nexus" serves as the point of entry for the restructuring of community by a nationalist, imperialist ethos that binds national subjects through commitment to the common project of Progress.

together constitute an ideological formation that presents itself as the very solution to the "condition of England question" that critics have often seen lacking in the pamphlet. Earlier in "Chartism," Carlyle writes:

> For that the Saxon British will ever submit to sink along with [the Irish] to such a state, we can assume as impossible . . . *there is a 'Berserkir-rage' in the heart of them* [the British], which will prefer all things, including destruction and self-destruction to that. Let no man awaken it, this same Berserkir-rage! *Deep-hidden it lies, far down in the centre, like genial central-fire, with stratum after stratum of arrangement, traditionary method, composed productiveness, all built above it, vivified and rendered fertile by it;* justice, clearness, silence, perseverance, unhasting unresting diligence, hatred of disorder, characterise this people; *their inward fire we saw, as all such fire should be, is hidden at the centre. Deep-hidden; but awakenable and immeasurable—let no man awaken it! With this strong silent people have the noisy vehement Irish now at length got common cause made.* (my emphases, *C* 140)

This passage begins with a rejection of the apocalyptic vision that Carlyle presented earlier in "Chartism." Employing the rhetorical strategy of an ominous warning, Carlyle warns that Irish immigrants might awaken an essential "Berserkir-rage"[62] hidden at the racial core of the British, one that until now has been sublimated into the work of civilization. As the catalysts for the violent disaffection of the British proletariat, the Irish have disturbed the racial temperament of the Saxons now that "[w]ith this strong silent people have the noisy vehement Irish now at length got common cause made." This statement refers not only to the "common cause" created by Union and immigration, but to developing political alliances between British proletarian radicals and some Irish anticolonial nationalists, alliances commonly lamented in antiradical ideology.[63]

I call attention to this passage because, read in conjunction with Sauerteig's history, it explains the ideological function of this nexus of British

62. The term "Berserkir," from which the word "berserk" is derived etymologically, refers to a particular tribe of Icelandic Saxon warriors; thus its use consolidates the Teuton racial lineage presented throughout "Chartism" and also signals a particular conquering, vengeful temperament that results from that lineage. The descriptive contains within it a genealogy of Saxon British character as envisioned by Carlyle, if you will.

63. For more on the history of the complex relationship between Chartism and various forms of Irish nationalism, see Hickman; Saville 1848; Dorothy Thompson, *Outsiders;* and John Belchem, "English Working-Class Radicalism and the Irish, 1815–1850," in *The Irish in the Victorian City,* ed. Roger Swift and Sheridan Gilley (London: Croon Helm, 1985), 85–97.

nationalism and anti-Irish racism that we find at work in "Chartism." This ideology serves to redirect the "rage" of the masses from the ruling classes and the British state into a xenophobic channel, diverting it toward the Irish immigrants in their midst. In other words, revolutionary violence and all its potential is defused and redirected—towards a specific population of immigrants and into the project of Empire. Identifying the Irish as the limit of a raced British nationality disrupts real and potential political organizations that might encompass both working-class radicals and immigrant colonial subjects; it also resolves the crises of national integrity created by the Act of Union. In Balibar's words, the category of immigration functions "a solvent of 'class consciousness.'"[64] Carlyle's anti-Irish racism and his vision of Britain hegemonize the British working classes by interpellating them as members of a racially homogenous nation of Saxons; class politics is subordinated to the imperative to reconsolidate national identity in the face of immigration. The 'terror' of revolution invoked by Carlyle is transformed into the 'terror' of an immigrant class who are identified as the locus of national degeneration.

The wild Milesian must be simultaneously incorporated into the national mythus and expelled as its other. Doing so identifies and potentially resolves the complex exigencies of national integrity that I have described. Ideas about Irish racial difference existed from the sixteenth century onward working in tandem with anti-Catholicism to produce a general notion of Irish barbarism.[65] However, I am identifying a transformation of the long-standing discourse of Irish racial difference, a transformation that takes place during the first half of the nineteenth century in Britain through the idea of the "condition of England question." While historians such as Hazel Waters and Kevin Whelan have presented compelling arguments that anti-Irish racism crystallized in its most explicit form during the Great Famine,[66] Carlyle's "Chartism" demonstrates that this crystallization stands as the culmination of a process that began in the previous decade. Prefamine racist discourse provided a way to think through the contradictions of Union, the effects of Irish immigration on the working class, the transformations effected by the development

64. "Is there a 'Neo-Racism'?" in Balibar and Wallerstein 20. Of course Balibar situates this phenomenon as occurring in the twentieth century during the era of late capitalism, but I would argue that the first instance of this occurred in nineteenth-century Britain upon the mass immigration of Irish subjects.

65. See Gibbons, "Race against Time" 150; and Hickman 19–53.

66. Hazel Waters, "The Great Famine and Anti-Irish Racism," *Race and Class* 37, no. 1 (July–Sept. 1995): 95–108. Kevin Whelan presented this argument in a lecture, "The Famine and Its Aftermath: A Post-Revisionist Perspective," delivered at the Irish Studies Seminar of Columbia University in 1994.

of the capitalist mode of production, and the impact of all of these historical crises on English and British national identity. Indeed, anti-Irish racism operated as one of the foundational ways that class itself and capitalism itself are understood in the Victorian period. It provided a way for Capital and Empire to save themselves from the unforeseen crises that they have engendered. For Carlyle, Irish racial difference and the English national integrity that it implies enable him to imagine a cure for the chronic affliction of class conflict in Britain. As he writes at the close of his pamphlet, "A disease; but the noblest of all,—as of her who is in pain and sore travail, but travails, that she may be a mother, and say, Behold there a new Man born!" The national disease of Irish immigration and the proletarian revolutionary discontent it produces can be transformed into the birth of a nation-state and of a new race of Saxon men.

This raced nation, and in particular its relation to Ireland, must be institutionalized in a very specific state form in order to fulfill its imperial and capitalist destiny. Carlyle only gestures toward this theorization of state power in "Chartism." For example, his call for education of the working classes implies the need for centralizing institutions and a uniform curriculum, new ideological apparatuses of the state. In contemporaneous writings such as his "Lectures on the History of Literature" (1838), he argues for the importance of what he constructs as British or Saxon literature and culture. Thus, this proposition for universal education in "Chartism" not only poses education as a question of national welfare and potentially state administration, but signals new forms of hegemonization of the proletariat that might be administered through the state.

However, to really understand Carlyle's call for a Saxon state, we must read "Chartism" in conjunction with two of his essays on Ireland, "Repeal of the Union," written in 1848,[67] and "Occasional Discourse on the Nigger

67. Throughout this chapter, I refer to a reprint of this essay titled "A Pearl of English Rhetoric: Thomas Carlyle on Repeal of the Union" (London: Field and Tuer, The Leadenhall Press, 1889); henceforth, the pamphlet will be cited parenthetically in the text as *RU*. The anonymous prefatory note to this edition discusses the reasons for the reprint of Carlyle's article in 1889. The writer states, "The paper which follows is Carlyle's answer to the outcry for Repeal [in 1848] . . . now foiled in the first effort, a great party chief [Gladstone] leads many English, Scottish, and Welsh, as well as the majority of Irish members in the cry for 'Repeal,' re-christened in our days 'Home Rule': and, if we are not careful, once for all, to 'annihilate' their hopes, they will get it too. Carlyle's objections to 'Repeal' are of the weightiest, and his profound and thoughtful words are entitled to respectful attention by those even who may differ most widely from them." This explanation for the republication of the article indicates not only the endurance of the Unionist ideology found in the pamphlet but also the way in which Carlyle's intellectual capital and celebrity served to legitimate the Unionist politics he espoused. I am grateful to Trinity College Library in Dublin for allowing me to reproduce this pamphlet.

Question" (1849). In both of these essays, Carlyle posits slavery as the model for Union and for Britain's relationship to Ireland. He naturalizes racial hierarchy as a bifurcation of the globe into those enslaved and those who are "lords" or masters; colonial domination finds its structure in slavery extended to a global scale as the plantation becomes the model for Empire. Of Ireland, he writes,

> Fruitless futile insurrection, continual sanguinary broils and riot that make his [the savage's or more specifically the Celt's] dwelling place a horror to mankind, mark his progress generation after generation; and if no beneficent hand will chain him into wholesome *slavery,* and with whip on back or otherwise, try to tame him and get some work out of him,—Nature herself, intent to have her work tilled, has no resource but to exterminate him as she has done the wolves and various other obstinately *free* creatures before now! These are hard words but they are true. (original emphasis, *RU* 49–50)

There is much to say about the politics of invoking "wholesome slavery," which must be read first and foremost as an extension of Carlyle's anti-abolitionist, pro-slavery stance. For my purposes, I want to call attention to the way that the state functions in this reimagining of Union as enslavement and as a relation of fundamental violence. For in "Occasional Discourse," Carlyle specifies what hand will hold the whip that enforces slavery in both the West Indies and in Ireland: "The State wants sugar from these Islands, and means to have it; wants virtuous industry in these Islands and must have it. The State demands of you such service as will bring these results, this latter result which includes all" (*OD* 378). In other words, Carlyle imagines that the state will ensure capitalist and imperialist "Progress" throughout the Empire through its monopoly of violence and its expropriative functions. Reading these texts back into "Chartism," we see the logical end of Carlyle's anti-Irish racism—that the colonial state must take new and specifically repressive forms in order to safeguard the interests of Capital and Empire and that it will have race as one of its organizing principles.[68] It is not difficult to imagine that this consent to a violent, racial state might serve to further fuse Britons across the divisions of class through commitment to "Progress," animus against colonial subjects, and a false distinction between those subject to the repression of the state and those subject to its protection and harmonization.

68. For an exploration of the history of the state as a foundationally racial institution, see David Theo Goldberg, *The Racial State* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2002).

As I have already suggested, Carlyle's vision of the "condition of England question" and the implied nation-state that I have just described moved throughout early and mid-Victorian culture and politics. It had a profound impact on Victorian politics—shaping parliamentary debates and public discourse in newspapers, for example. Conservatives echoed Carlyle's deep sense of national panic and conservative agenda; Liberal thinkers drew on his diagnosis of crisis as an imperative toward social reform. For example, social realist novels that actually shared the name of Carlyle's intervention—the "condition of England" novels—followed the structure of his pamphlet in literary form; they engaged in politically and socially diagnostic representation and provided a potential cure to the dangerous disease of modernity, and more specifically the threat of revolution and disintegration, through novelistic resolution. That such novels imagined themselves as making direct political interventions is evidenced by their publication in newspapers, their fixation with representing social "problems," as well as their use in political debates. Not surprisingly, the Irish question and in particular Irish immigrants played a central role in many of these texts. For example, Elsie Michie explores the ways in which Irish difference exists as a structuring element in the writings of the Brontës, in particular *Wuthering Heights* and *Jane Eyre,* and a primary way in which the problematics of class elevation and class mobility are explored.[69] In his controversial 1850 novel, *Alton Locke,* novelist and former Chartist Charles Kingsley represented the 1848 mass mobilization of Chartism as the work of Irish criminals, representatives of a "nation of liars,"[70] who had become the leaders of the movement through the misguided alliance of Chartism with the Repeal movement. Kingsley attributes all the violence of Chartism to Irish sources, and even represents the Chartist headquarters as a kind of Babel, in which French, English, and Irish are all spoken simultaneously until no linguistic sense can be made of the political debates occurring there.[71] Thus, echoing Carlyle's argument in "Chartism," important literature of the late 1840s figured Ireland as the source of the insurgency that might transform political struggle in Britain into violent revolution.

69. She writes, "the image of one's heroic [male] ability to overcome class or economic differences covers over the problem that to leave Ireland behind is not to leave one's Irishness behind." Michie 60. Terry Eagleton makes a compelling case for Heathcliff's Irishness in *Heathcliff and the Great Hunger* (London: Verso, 1995). Susan Meyer calls attention to the possibility of Heathcliff's Irishness in *Imperialism at Home: Race and Victorian Women's Fiction* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996).

70. Charles Kingsley, *The Life and Works of Charles Kingsley in 19 Volumes,* vol. 8, *Alton Locke* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1901), 174–75.

71. Ibid. 176.

Elizabeth Gaskell's *North and South* provides us with a particularly striking example of the ways that the Carlylean formation of nationalism and anti-Irish racism is taken up in novelistic form. The novel's project is itself nationalist. As the title suggests, it dramatizes the bifurcation of Britain into the rural, semifeudal South and the industrialized North, and then seeks to suture those halves together into an organic whole. To a certain degree, class difference and class relations are displaced into a geographic schism. However, when the novel's protagonist, Margaret, migrates from South to North, an emplotment that allows for a mingling of Southern sensibilities with Northern modernity, she discovers a new set of social relations deranged by "the cash-nexus," as Gaskell cites Carlyle. The penultimate scene of class conflict occurs when striking workers come to the home of a factory owner, Mr. Thornton, in order to protest the importation and hiring of Irish migrants as scabs. The workers threaten violence against Thornton not so much because he is the agent of their exploitation, but because he protects the Irish workers on whom they wish to inflict harm. Following a Carlylean model of displacement, Gaskell redirects proletarian protest and violence from the industrialist to Irish immigrants. It is also crucial to note that the presence of those Irish bodies produces a violent transgression on the part of workers, an act of violence that, misdirected and uncontrollable, injures Margaret rather than Thornton, their target. The woman's vulnerable body becomes a pedagogic tool that educates the workers about the dangers of violent protest.

The Irish body plays a similar instrumental role as the female body in the novel, and here Gaskell reworks Carlyle's topos of working-class "Berserkir-rage" to make it operate within a somewhat more liberal agenda. Gaskell avoids the kind of virulent and explicit anti-Irish racism that we saw in Carlyle's "Chartism," but in fact engages in another more nuanced form of racism. Irish migrants are represented as helpless and as victimized, as ultimately passive bodies. The novel both institutes the kind of "Berserkir-rage" that we saw in "Chartism," naturalizing it, and then locates it in proletarian irrationality, thereby obscuring its origins in capitalist ideology. At the same time, both the Irish workers and the British workers are represented as requiring protection from each other and from themselves; the capitalist, Thornton, becomes the figure of rationality who mediates irrational outbursts of violence and seemingly long-standing resentment in the form of anti-immigrant racism. In the novel's ultimately conservative class politics, the Irish migrants serve the function of preserving class relations by making exploitation and expropriation seem ethical and palatable; they also serve to anchor a kind of capitalist protectionism that is secured through the novel's resolution in the newly con-

figured "ethical" factory. Notably, however, the Irish disappear by the novel's end. When Thornton transforms his capitalist endeavors into a new incarnation of the factory that marries Northern industry with Southern precapitalist responsibility, the question of Irish workers is repressed entirely. The novel's resolution—the literal and figurative marriage of North and South—is made possible by ignoring the question of the colony to the West once Irish immigrants have served their function. Thus, while an explicit and virulent anti-Irish racism is not found in the novel, the text's narrative strategy mirrors the Carlylean "condition of England question" quite dramatically.

As I have already suggested, the "condition of England question" also had an unlikely impact on contemporaneous radical writing. Six years after the publication of "Chartism," Friedrich Engels would write his first book-length study of British proletarian circumstances—*The Condition of the Working Class in England.* It is in his chapter, "Irish Immigration," that Engels cites Carlyle at length, quoting from the "wild Milesian" passage, in fact. Using a Carlylean vision of Irish difference, Engels then lays out the degenerative impact of the Irish immigrants on the British proletariat, transforming them into a revolutionary force through "daily contact" and "intermarriage."[72] At the crux of Engels's argument, close contact and miscegenation become necessary catalysts for revolution in England. The consequences of this racial fusion are twofold. First, as the above passage demonstrates, the gulf between the working class and the bourgeoisie is transformed from an economic division into an immutable division of race. As a result, "[t]he middle classes have more in common with every other nation in the world than with the proletariat which lives on their own doorsteps" (*CWC* 139). Engels rethinks Disraeli's infamous description of class difference as the bifurcation of Britain into "two nations" and reconstructs that division along the axis of race. This new profound split makes class conflict more intense, and less able to be ameliorated by any prophylactic measures such as Reform legislation or even the extension of suffrage that Chartists demand. In an inversion of Carlyle's project, for Engels, racialism does not produce a fantasy of national reconciliation but provides the condition of possibility for the destruction of British national cohesion.

Second, the transfusion of Irish blood into the British national body "add[s] an explosive force to English society" (*CWC* 309). What must be transmitted is not simply racial difference, but a racial character that con-

72. *The Condition of the Working Class in England,* trans. W. O. Henderson and W. H. Chaloner (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1974), 139. Henceforth this text will be parenthetically as *CWC.*

tains within it the means to trigger revolution. Since Engels asserts that the Irish are "passionate," mercurial and fiery, Irish bodies carry within them a predisposition to violence not possessed by the British proletariat. Engels reminds his readers that "[t]he Irish people have resisted oppression in two ways"—agitation for repeal of the Union and "acts of violence." He states that "[c]rime is endemic in the rural districts [of Ireland] and not a day passes without the perpetration of some serious breach of the law. Nor do the Irish hesitate to kill their oppressors . . . " (*CWC* 309). Therefore, the most important element of Irishness is a predisposition toward violence—a raced tendency to resist oppression through brutal and criminal means. Through contact, intermarriage, and miscegenation, the Irish propensity for transgressing the law and for the murder of oppressors will infect the English worker with the temperament necessary to strike out against the bourgeoisie and the British state. In other words, the English working class are faced with their own racial lack which translates into the failure of their radical politics; a transfusion of Irish blood is required to hasten the development of class consciousness and then to transform Chartism into active, violent upheaval. For Engels, working-class identity in England cannot be theorized without an account of the racial consequences of immigration; racial discourse works as an indispensable element in the dialectical movement of history toward class conflict and revolution.

These brief examples demonstrate the ways in which Carlyle's remedy to national crisis in nationalism and anti-Irish racism found their way into Victorian culture throughout the 1840s and beyond. However, to understand fully the impact of the "condition of England question" formation, we must return to Marx and his analysis of its repercussions on the capitalist mode of production in Britain.

CODA

RETURNING TO MARX

Reading Carlyle and the "condition of England question" that pervaded British culture and politics allows us to return to Marx and his attention to Ireland with new insight. Indeed, by the late 1860s, Marx had come to understand the profound influence of the "condition of England question" as I have outlined above; as a result, his analysis opened up and transformed. He explores the ramifications of Carlyle's "condition of England question" taking root and flourishing. For example, in 1870, he begins to describe the foundational

function of Ireland in Britain's economy as not only material but ideological and cultural. He identifies Ireland as:

> . . . the bulwark of the *English landed aristocracy.* The exploitation of this country is not only one of the main sources of their material wealth; it is their greatest *moral* strength. They represent in fact *England's dominion over Ireland.* Ireland is, therefore the *grand moyen* by which the English aristocracy maintains *its rule in England* itself. (original emphases, *FI* 168)

In this passage from a letter to Siegfried Meyer and August Vogt, who organized in New York, Marx emphasizes a "moral" strength gained from the exploitation of Ireland; in other words, he seeks to identify the ideological function that "dominion over Ireland" serves. He writes that the aristocracy gains from its investment in Ireland "its greatest moral force, i.e., that of representing the domination of England over Ireland" (*FI* 254). Here Marx begins to engage with the question of British national identity and nationalism. The exploitation and domination of Ireland provide the British ruling classes with a "moral strength," a powerful image of themselves as effective colonizers, which in turn secures them not just economic but hegemonic power in Britain. Note Marx's use of the word "representing" in this formulation. Cultural, political, and literary representations of a particular idea of Britishness secure Empire and in turn Capital. This imperialist nationalism provides a site of identification between British ruling classes and the proletariat, one that threatens to nullify class conflict. Hence, Marx writes, "[dissolving the Union] must be done, not as a matter of sympathy with Ireland but as a demand made in the interests of the English proletariat. If not the English people will remain tied to the leading strings of the ruling classes, because it will have to join with them in a common front against Ireland" (*FI* 394). In turn, this common front will transform the English worker into the "stupid tool of English rule in Ireland" (*FI* 394) as revolutionary potential is diffused and displaced by an imperialist nationalism that in fact operates in the service of Capital.

In other letters, Marx argues that what secures the success of this nationalism over class politics is in fact anti-Irish racism. He reveals how the revolutionary politics of the British proletariat is defused by a particular construction of Britishness that has racial "antagonism" at its core:

> All English industrial and commercial centers now possess a working class *split* into two *hostile* camps: English proletarians and Irish proletarians. The

> ordinary English worker hates the Irish worker because he sees in him a competitor who lowers his standard of life. Compared with the Irish worker he feels himself a member of the *ruling nation* and for this very reason he makes himself into a tool of the aristocrats and capitalists *against Ireland* and thus strengthens their domination *over himself.* He cherishes religious, social and national prejudices against the Irish worker. His attitude is much the same as that of the 'poor whites' towards the 'niggers' in the former slave states of the American Union. The Irishman pays him back with interest in his own money. He sees in the English worker both the accomplice and the stupid tool of *English rule in Ireland.* This antagonism is artificially sustained and intensified by the press, the pulpit, the comic papers, in short by all the means at the disposal of the ruling classes. *This antagonism* is the *secret of the impotence of the English working class,* despite its organization.[73]

This colonial and racial "antagonism" dismantles the radical organization of the working class, producing fractures within its politics. It does so through the production of a nationality that seemingly transcends class relations through recourse to ideas of national difference and, as Marx indicates with his American analogy, the discourse of race. Marx identifies this as an ideological formation, one that is widely disseminated through various ideological state apparatuses.

Thus, Marx comes to see proletarian revolutionary politics, "the social movement" of the First International, as dependent upon not only antiracism but Irish anticolonialism. He calls attention to the common interests that bind the English and the Irish working classes, suggesting that this consciousness might undermine and transcend imperialist nationalism and its racism. The dissolution of the Union is necessary to this process, for it is Unionism and the colonial relation between Britain and Ireland that perpetuates anti-Irish racism and "antagonism" between these two proletarian groups (*FI* 394). In his writings on Ireland, Marx puts race and racism at the center of the capitalist mode of production in Britain, and he also underscores the relation, not only economic but ideological and cultural, between Capital and Empire. As he argues that a battle over identity and how the working classes see themselves must be waged, he implies that imperialist nationalism is central to that struggle.

Hence, Marx's writings on Ireland demonstrate that race, anticolonialism, and nationalism are foundational to his thought in the 1860s. More funda-

73. Original emphasis, Marx to Meyer and Vogt (*FI* 169).

mentally, however, his remarks concerning the significant place of Ireland in capitalist Britain reveal that he is *unable* to diagnose the problems of class politics in Britain without engaging seriously with Ireland and its position in the United Kingdom and the Empire. The category of nation becomes central to his understanding of Capital because it had become central to the workings of Capital in nineteenth-century Britain. He writes, "in Ireland, it is not only a simple economic question but at the same time a *national* question, because the landlords there are not, as in England, the traditional dignitaries and representatives of the nation but its morally hated oppressors." The disabling condition of the British proletariat is secured by an ideology in which they are interpellated as "member[s] of a ruling *nation*" (Marx's emphasis). In these letters on Ireland, Marx, in an uncharacteristic move, takes the question of nationalism and the category of the nation quite seriously. In fact, Irish anticolonial nationalism becomes a necessary catalyst for the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism in Britain. This move rests on the recognition of an ideology of British national identity that takes shape through the justification of colonialism in Ireland and through "religious, social and national prejudices against the Irish worker." Marx recognizes that Ireland played a crucial role that was not just material and economic but ideological, obscuring the workings of Capital. "Severing the connection" would lay bare exploitation and would dismantle the intensifying imperialist nationalism that served as a screen for capitalism's rapacious expropriation of the working class.

For Marx, writing in the late 1860s and 1870s, a new form of Irish anticolonial struggle and the ideological backlash against it was what allowed him to see so clearly the end results of the "condition of England question." This movement, Fenianism, produced new forms of British nationalism. However, it is also worth keeping in mind Carlyle's brief but striking invocation of the power of "the State," for Fenianism comes to play a crucial role in British state formation. In the next chapter, I will examine the ways in which, by the mid-Victorian period, the ideas of British and Irish nationalisms and national identity with which I have engaged thus far become central to the development of the hegemonic modern state-form in Britain, those institutions and apparatuses that are posited as the natural embodiment of the Saxon nation and the United Kingdom that Carlyle envisions. In fact it was in relation to the radical movement, Fenianism, that this new state emerged.

CHAPTER 2

FENIANISM AND THE STATE

Theorizing Violence and the Modern Hegemonic State in the Writings of Matthew Arnold and John Stuart Mill

As 1865 drew to a close, a cartoon titled "Rebellion Had Bad Luck" (Fig. 2–1) appeared in the pages of London's *Punch* magazine.[1] The image by John Tenniel works to reassure the British public about the threat posed by Fenianism, a mass movement of Irish anticolonial insurgency.[2] In the months preceding the cartoon's appearance, Fenianism had begun to loom large as a threat not only to British rule in Ireland but to security within Britain proper as well. Colonial authorities became aware that they were facing a well-organized, well-funded international network of radical revolutionary nationalists who planned a rising sometime in 1865. In the fall and winter of that year,

1. *Punch* magazine was a weekly comedic serial known for commenting on contemporary politics through visual caricature. For histories of Punch's caricatures concerning Ireland, see L. P. Curtis, *Apes and Angels: The Irishman in Victorian Caricature,* rev. ed. (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institute, 1997) and Michael De Nie, *The Eternal Paddy: Irish Identity and the British Press, 1798–1882* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2004).

2. Estimates of Fenian membership vary widely among historians, although James Stephens estimated that in 1865 the organization had at least 200,000 members in Great Britain and Ireland alone. See "Fenianism: Past and Present," an incomplete undated manuscript in Stephens Papers, National Library of Ireland, Ms. 10,492, Folder 6. Henceforth, all manuscripts from the National Library of Ireland will be cited as NLI. In addition, as a network of secret societies whose members operated covertly within the British military and police, Fenianism is extremely difficult to quantify. This incalculability elicited great anxiety within the apparatuses of surveillance used by the British state to repress Fenian insurgency. Members also engaged in varying degrees of participation and often identified themselves and their politics through other political movements with which Fenianism was imbricated.

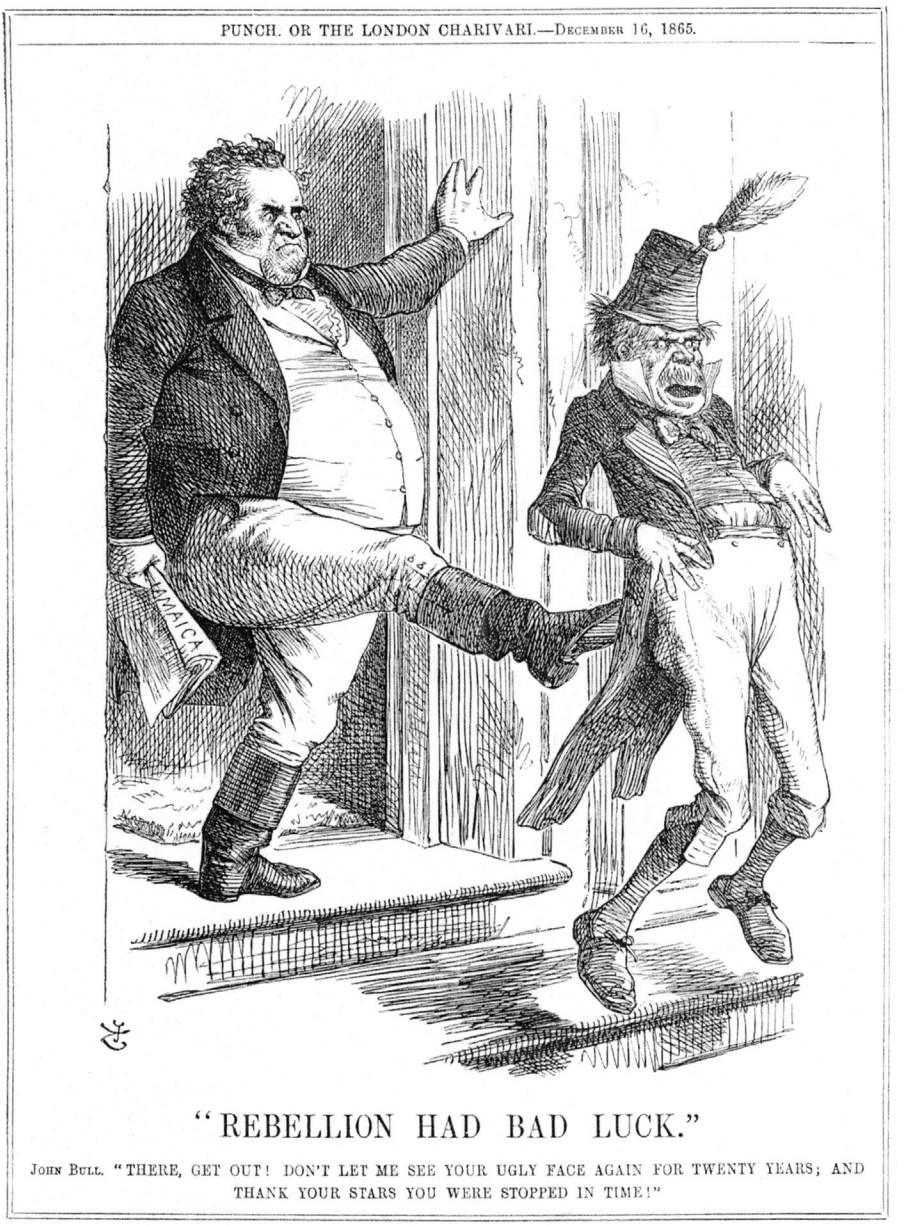

FIGURE 2–1. "Rebellion Had Back Luck," 1865

the state engaged in a preemptive strike of counterinsurgent repression made possible by establishing martial law in Ireland—the raid and suppression of the Fenian newspaper, the *Irish People;* the arrest and conviction of leaders for treason-felony; their sentences to imprisonment and hard labor; the court-martial of Irish soldiers in the British army believed to be Fenians; the suspension of habeas corpus in Ireland; and relentless police raids throughout Ireland which culminated in the arrest of James Stephens, the elusive leader of the Irish Republican Brotherhood.[3] The *Punch* cartoon condenses these actions into a single metaphoric gesture. John Bull, male personification of the English nation, kicks a Fenian out of a building, exclaiming emphatically, "There, get out!" A parental figure disciplining the infantilized and racialized Fenian, John Bull enacts the swift containment and elimination of anticolonial "Rebellion" that becomes no longer threatening but farcical. The caption's reference to "bad luck" is of course ironic; it is not luck at all but the strength, superiority, and swift violence of the imperial nation-state that renders Fenianism completely inert.

Much could be said about this complex cartoon, in particular because it inaugurates a series of such images of Fenianism that appeared in the British press from 1865 through the late 1880s. For now, however, "Rebellion Had Bad Luck" demands that we consider a pressing question on which I want to focus first. Why does the repression of the Fenian movement by British authority take the form of an expulsion? By considering "Rebellion Had Bad Luck" in terms of expulsion, a critical aspect of the representation of Fenian insurgency in mid-Victorian Britain comes into view—its intimate relationship to state formation. John Bull kicks the Fenian out of a building that is unnamed. However, its architectural character as well as John Bull's obvious authority over it suggests that the edifice is "official" and associated with the institutions of the state. This implication is reinforced by the sheath of papers in John Bull's hand titled "Jamaica." They refer to news of the Morant Bay rebellion that had appeared in England the month before, news that inaugurated a lengthy parliamentary and public debate about colonial violence and martial law. As Paul Gilroy has argued, the events of Morant Bay and the ensuing Governor Eyre controversy point to a constitutive paradox concerning the relation between violence and the state: "that martial law can be

3. There are few histories of the Fenian movement and its two main organizations, the Irish Republican Brotherhood and the Fenian Brotherhood. For example, see Owen McGee. *The IRB: The Irish Republican Brotherhood from the Land League to Sinn Fein* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2005); John Newsinger, *Fenianism in Mid-Victorian Britain* (London: Pluto, 1994); Leon Ò Broin, *Fenian Fever: An Anglo-American Dilemma* (New York: New York University Press, 1971); and Patrick Quinlivan and Paul Rose, *The Fenians in England, 1865–1872* (London: John Calder, 1982).

simultaneously both the absence of law and its highest expression: the general entitlement of sovereign power to deploy violence in order to overcome challenges to its own authority."[4] According to the logic of the cartoon, the expulsion of Fenianism allows the nation-state to turn its attention back to the critical matter of Morant Bay and the problem of state violence in the context of Empire. However, the distinction that the cartoon makes between the cases of Jamaican and Irish insurgency—one neatly embodied as papers to be read and considered, the other represented as an unruly and grotesque body that must be expelled and disciplined—is in fact a ruse. At stake in both historical instances is the question of the colonial state's right to enact violence and death on its subjects. Therefore, while the image implies that the question of Jamaica remains open, it is in fact answered by the unquestioned expulsion of the Fenian whose body is the object of the nation-state's efficacious violence. While the violence enacted by John Bull is represented as humorous and is tempered by its almost parental character, Bull's role as father—with its implied paternalism—suggests an assertion of ultimate power over the body of colonial subjects—the power of not only violence and exile but of life and death.

The cartoon stages the ejection of the Fenian from the domain of rational politics and by extension from the mythos of the rights and protections of citizenship conferred by the British state. The image expresses the imperative to repress and to occlude Irish anticolonialism from legitimate political discourse. Fenianism and its primary political organizations, the Irish Republican Brotherhood and the Fenian Brotherhood, are exteriorized, constructed as the other of the democratic state. This expulsion legitimates state violence against unruly subjects and the assertion of martial law as a necessary, even foundational feature of state power.

In the image, however, this expulsion remains strangely incomplete. The Fenian hangs on the threshold of the House of Commons and similar institutions signified by the building policed by John Bull. In the frame of the cartoon, the act of violence is always occurring and never completed, existing in a state of constant repetition. In addition, a temporal contradiction structures the cartoon. The past tense of the caption reassures the reading public that anticolonial insurgency is now lodged safely in the past as a new year begins. Fenian rebellion has been vanquished. Yet, the visual image leaves the Fenian in the frame and in the present tense. His expulsion is promised but not yet secured. This temporality suggests a more complex relation between

4. *Postcolonial Melancholia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 21.

the imperial nation-state and anticolonial insurgency. John Bull can never completely and successfully expel Fenianism from the domain of the state because it is in relation to this figure—the racialized, violent insurgent—that his power is constituted. In "Rebellion Had Bad Luck," the Fenian is revealed as the mechanism by which the British nation-state consolidates its power, justifies its violence, and reassures and hegemonizes its citizens through the production of consent. Thus, the Fenian exists as a powerful example of the "state of exception" as theorized by Giorgio Agamben: "the particular 'force' of law consists in this capacity of law to maintain itself in relation to an exteriority . . . the extreme form of relation by which something is included solely through its exclusion."[5] While John Bull appears to expel the Fenian from the domain of rational politics, in fact the Fenian becomes central to the way the mid-Victorian state is constituted. Since state power rests on the claim that it can discipline and ultimately banish, through violence or even death, those subjects who challenge the validity of its sovereignty, the Fenian stands as the axial figure who becomes the threshold or limit that defines the state.

Various theorists of state formation and the law have attended to the intimate, even constitutive relation between violence and the state. For example, Max Weber defines state power in terms of a "monopoly of violence,"[6] and Walter Benjamin describes the state as the quintessential legal subject entitled to exercise violence.[7] The nature of the relationship between violence and the state underwent a significant transformation in the 1860s in Britain. In their analysis of English state formation, Philip Corrigan and Derek Sayer argue that the institutions of the state emerge out of a cultural revolution that begins in the medieval period, but they also identify the mid-nineteenth century as the period during which the recognizably modern democratic state comes into being in Britain.[8] David Lloyd and Paul Thomas describe this process as "the crystallization of the Victorian state and its transition from a predominately coercive to a hegemonic form" between 1860 and 1870, and

5. *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998), 18.

6. Max Weber describes the constitutive place of violence in the formation of the modern state in the following definition: "the state is a human community that (successfully) claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory. . . . The state is considered the sole source of the 'right' to use violence." "Politics as a Vocation," in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1958), 78.

7. Benjamin identifies organized labor as one exception that also possesses the right to violence. "Critique of Violence," in *Reflections: Essays, Aphorisms, Autobiographical Writings* (New York: Schocken, 1978), 281.

8. *The Great Arch: English State Formation as Cultural Revolution* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1985).

"the saturation of discourse on society with an 'idea of the state' or, more evidently, with the subordinate conception of the proper relation of the subject as citizen to the state."[9] I will show that, during this critical moment of state formation in Britain in 1865, the state and its violence come to be defined and legitimated in relation to anticolonial insurgency, specifically Irish revolutionary nationalism in the form of Fenianism. The Fenian exists in a relation of exception that allows the state to consolidate its power through a unique combination of new forms of hegemony and force. As we will see, the state that is imagined and develops in relation to Fenianism is simultaneously colonial and domestic, and recognizes the concerns of Capital and Empire as inextricably bound.

This chapter examines Liberal political theory in order to explore the place of Fenianism in mid-Victorian elaborations of state power and state formation. I turn to Matthew Arnold and John Stuart Mill, two key Liberal theorists of the state and of representational democracy, in order to trace the ways in which they identify the Fenian as pivotal to their visions of the British hegemonic state, in particular how they describe the place of violence within a newly emerging state form. Recent scholarship has demonstrated classic Liberalism's complicity with and support of Empire.[10] While building on such work, my project in this chapter is different. I argue that counterinsurgent violence becomes a fundamental feature of the state that Mill and Arnold theorize, serving to supplement and make possible hegemonic power at home and in the colonies.[11] For these Victorian intellectuals, as in the *Punch* cartoon, the Irish Fenian, the unruly and resistant colonial subject, serves to rationalize state violence; the Fenian is also the figure in relation to which obedient citizens are imagined and hegemonized, and through which the frontiers of citizenry are identified.

Recognizing the central place of Fenianism in mid-Victorian theorizations of the state bears out my larger argument that the drive toward military and hegemonic control of Ireland, and the Unionist politics that underpins such a project, are constitutive elements in state and nation formation in

9. *Culture and the State* (New York: Routledge, 1998), 115.

10. For example, Uday Singh Mehta, *Liberalism and Empire: A Study in Nineteenth-Century British Liberal Thought* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999); Jennifer Pitts, *A Turn to Empire: The Rise of Imperial Liberalism in Britain and France* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005); and Lynn Zastoupil, *John Stuart Mill and India* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1994).

11. Gramsci's understanding of hegemony, of course, is that it is exercised through both coercion and consent. Stuart Hall makes this point in "Gramsci's Relevance for the Study of Race and Ethnicity," in *Stuart Hall: Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies,* ed. David Morley and Kuan-Hsing Chen (London: Routledge, 1996), 426.

Victorian Britain. The fantasy of expulsion staged in the cartoon in fact represents a dialectical relationship between Irish anticolonial nationalism, on the one hand, and British imperialist nationalism and state formation on the other. Since the expulsion works to establish the parameters of legitimate politics, it defines the British nation, its citizens, as well as the state that claims to represent them. Both British nation and state come to be understood not just as imperialist but as Unionist and counterinsurgent, existing in a permanent relation of power and violence to the Fenian at their threshold. The legitimation of violence against 'unruly' insurgent subjects in the United Kingdom allows for the imagining and interpellation of an oppositional figure—the obedient British citizen-subject who exists in a consenting relation to the state. The Fenian's exclusion consolidates the inclusion of those understood as orderly British citizens; in other words, the British state binds the nation and the people to it through the exception of the Fenian.

This nexus of Fenianism, the modern hegemonic state, and the formation of British citizen-subjects in the mid-1860s must be situated in the context of the Reform League's mobilization for the extension of suffrage, a development contemporaneous with the beginnings of the Fenian crisis and the Governor Eyre controversy in 1865.[12] While the Hyde Park riots did not occur until 1866 and the Reform Acts extending enfranchisement were not ratified until 1867 and 1868, by the end of 1865 the Reform League and trade-union and radical movements with which it was allied were engaged in sustained public agitation for the right of working men to suffrage. This highly visible and effectively organized radicalism incited reconsiderations of ideas of British nationhood at this time. Of particular interest to politicians and intellectuals was the role and structure of a stronger state that might build consensus across the division of class, that might produce a newly configured citizen-subject, and that would reestablish order through new modes of interpellation.[13] As the security of the capitalist mode of pro-

12. For a succinct account of the key events of Reform agitation and legislation, see K. T. Hoppen, *The Mid-Victorian Generation, 1846–1886* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1998). For a history of the Morant Bay uprising and the ensuing Governor Eyre controversy (which are invoked in the cartoon itself), see Bernard Semmel, *The Governor Eyre Controversy* (London: MacGibbon and Kee, 1962); and Gad Heuman, *"The Killing Time": The Morant Bay Rebellion in Jamaica* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1994). Catherine Hall provides a succinct account of the events of Morant Bay and the ensuing controversy, connecting them to both Reform legislation in Britain and contemporaneous politics concerning Ireland. "The Nation within and without," in Catherine Hall, Keith McClelland, and Jane Rendall, *Defining the Victorian Nation: Class, Race, Gender, and the Reform Act of 1867* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 179-232.

13. See Lloyd and Thomas, in particular the introduction and chapter 4. John Saville has provided an important historical account of the emergence of the capitalist state during the first half of the nineteenth century in *The Consolidation of the Capitalist State, 1800–1850* (London: Pluto, 1994).

duction appeared under threat, Capital reorganized its modes of power and expropriation. In particular, Reform debates elicited serious questions about the ramifications of the extension of suffrage to the male proletariat—how should the state deal with insurgency brought before the law, and how might insurgents be incorporated as obedient citizens? How might the state create national consensus within a United Kingdom riven by class and colonial conflict? Thus, while the modern state had long been in existence in Britain, it entered into a process of intense transformation during the 1860s. Shifting frontiers of citizenry and effective modes of class agitation created new problems for Capital, and the result was new forms of hegemony, institutionality, and power that sought to render labor docile and productive once again. As I will show, the Fenian, and more generally the ideology and practice of colonial counterinsurgency by the British state, played a constitutive role in this process. Fenianism and counterinsurgency were central to the way that Liberal theorists envisioned the modern state's transformation to accommodate the changing demands of Capital and Empire.

I am suggesting that the work of Liberal intellectuals such as Arnold and Mill did not simply exist as theory. The effect of their writings was both ideological and material; they had an incalculable cultural, political, and institutional impact on the historical processes that I have described.[14] Therefore, my reading of this political philosophy offers a material and cultural genealogy of the modern state form in Britain. The British state is not just defined or understood in relation to Ireland as a colony and anticolonial insurgency but is institutionalized in the same reciprocal manner. In his groundbreaking work on anticolonial nationalism, David Lloyd has argued convincingly:

> [I]t is the definitional myth of the state that it comes into being and claims its famous 'monopoly of violence' in order to impose its regularities, civility, and laws on an unformed populace whose very incommensurability to the state becomes the index of an innate violence. At the same time, the forms of the state conform to a reason which is effectively transhistorical, always the representative of the most modern, the most enlightened and civil forms of rule against which the colonized are measured and found backwards. The examples of Philippine banditry and Irish agrarian movements indicate, to the contrary, a double process: on the one hand, the interface between the state and the popular forms of the colonized produces a labile space in which each undergoes transformation; on the other, the very institutions which emerge in

14. Lloyd and Thomas 125.

> that space must relegate the recalcitrant forms for which they were instituted to anteriority, as signs of an incivility whose very persistence legitimates the violence of the state.[15]

The Irish Republican Brotherhood had more in common with the agrarian movements that Lloyd describes than the cultural nationalism of Young Ireland or with Irish constitutional nationalism of the 1850s and 1860s that was exclusively statist in its ideology. A decentered[16] movement that was in some ways inaccessible to and often critiqued the logic and rationality of the imperial state, Fenianism became the foundational other of the mid-Victorian state. However, we must also understand this as part of the "double process" that Lloyd outlines. He writes, "what appears in statist narrative as premodern, atavistic and generally violent elements of colonial society are in fact reciprocally engaged in the emergence of the modern apparatus of the colonial state."[17] Fenianism participated in the "transformation" of the state not only through its central role in the British production of recentering ideals of nation, state representation, and citizenship, but also through its instrumental position in the material development of the tactics, apparatuses, and ideology of counterinsurgency that became defining features of the modern British state. As in the case of other spaces of Empire,[18] Ireland, and specifically the repressive apparatuses that worked to contain Fenianism, became a laboratory for experimenting with new forms of state power. For example, several years before the institution of compulsory mugshots in Britain, photography and other tactics of modern surveillance were first instituted in Ireland as part of Dublin Castle's counter-Fenian technologies.[19] Habeas corpus was suspended repeatedly in Ireland throughout the nineteenth century, as was the right to bear arms and the legal protocols of search and seizure. The suspension of habeas corpus in 1865 in response to the possibility of a Fenian rising led to a mass internment of unconvicted suspected Fenians in Irish and British

15. "Regarding Ireland," in *Ireland after History* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1999), 45–46.

16. I derive the term "decentered" from the work of Luke Gibbons and David Lloyd. See Gibbons's "Identity without a Centre: Allegory, History and Irish Nationalism," in *Transformations in Irish Culture* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1996), 137–43; and Lloyd's "Nationalisms Against the State," in *Ireland after History* 19–36.

17. Lloyd, "Nationalisms Against the State."

18. For example, the use of fingerprinting as a method of identifying criminals and insurgents was first developed by British authorities in India. See Simon A. Cole, *Suspect Identities: A History of Fingerprinting and Criminal Identification* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001).

19. Breandan MacSuibhne and Amy E. Martin, "Fenians in the Frame: Photographing Irish Political Prisoners," *The Field Day Review* 1 (2005):100–19.

jails, some held without trial for up to two years. Ireland was legislated as an exceptional space, no longer subject to the guaranteed rights of the state, but existing in a perpetual "state of emergency." As these examples demonstrate, the state took its shape as a modern institution, particularly as an antiterrorist institution, in relation to the Fenian movement.

It is not surprising that Fenianism would play such a crucial role in mid-Victorian state and nation formation. The movement heralded a new form of anticolonialism, one that brought together a variety of tactics—mainstream nationalist practice, cultural nationalist production, and militarized guerilla violence—into an unusually effective form of resistance. Robert Young argues persuasively that this "combination of tactics" in Irish anticolonialism "provided the model . . . for all future anti-colonial struggle aside from those dependent entirely on military insurrection," playing a formative role in international anti-imperial struggle.[20] Indeed, Britain faced a new threat to its global domination—an alternative form of modernity that threatened the power of Empire and Capital, one of the first effective forms of political violence to threaten its colonial ascendancy. This anticolonial insurgency would transform the state form that secured British power at home and abroad.

My work on this moment in the history of state formation has obvious contemporary relevance. Paul Gilroy has argued that the colonial past must be made useful by revealing and then challenging "the revised conceptions of sovereignty that have been invented to accommodate the dreams of the new imperial order" (3). He elaborates this method and political project by using the example of the Morant Bay Rebellion in Jamaica in 1865 to understand the situation of the interned Camp Delta prisoners in Cuba in the early twenty-first century. Similarly, this chapter seeks to provide a genealogy of how the modern British state emerges out of a crisis of counterinsurgency and colonial domination. The state takes on new functions, in particular reserving the right to transgress its own laws and its rights-based discourse in the name of what is clearly a "war on terror," and thus aims to secure the production of citizens' consent to be represented by and subject to an inherently violent state. In a contemporary era during which Empire finds its newest justifications in a politics of "counterterrorism" and when State power justifies the suspension of rights in the name of protectionism, it is instructive to look back at a moment in which such developments, a crucial feature of modernity, took shape. In the writings of Arnold and Mill, we find an archive that reveals

20. *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), 302.

what was at stake in a new Victorian vision of the state as it responded to insurgency and the new demands of Empire and Capital.

DEFINING AND THEORIZING "FENIANISM"

Before moving to the writings of Arnold and Mill, it is necessary to describe the Fenian movement and the difficulties that it presented the imperial state as a unique form of anticolonial insurgency. I am not providing a history of Fenianism per se because in many ways the movement resists historicization and historical narrative.[21] For reasons that I will outline below, it is difficult to describe the movement in a linear, coherent narrative or in any way that seems comprehensive. What I offer here, therefore, is a sketch of some of the most salient features of Fenianism and a theoretical overview of its anticolonial politics. My description does not stand as a history of the movement and seeks primarily to make clear the theoretical and political stakes in my work on the movement.

The word "Fenianism," as it began to be used in the late 1850s and 1860s, refers to a complex matrix of political formations and organizations, all of which identified themselves as part of a larger anticolonial, nationalist, and separatist movement in Ireland and around the world. Founded in 1858 by James Stephens and John O'Mahoney, Fenianism was composed of two main branches, the Irish Republican Brotherhood in Ireland and the Fenian Brotherhood in the United States.[22] A mass movement composed primarily of the working, agricultural, and artisan classes in Ireland,[23] Fenians engaged

21. It is quite striking that, until quite recently, any comprehensive history of the Fenians or even its Irish organization, the IRB, remained unwritten. R. Comerford's attempt to provide such a history, *The Fenians in Context: Irish Politics and Society, 1848–1882* (New York: Humanities, 1985), in its desire to depoliticize the movement, is wholly unsatisfactory. Recently, Owen McGee's excellent study of the Irish Republican Brotherhood has begun the project of documenting the history of Fenianism, at least in Ireland. As will become clear, this relative lack of historiographical attention to Fenianism is at least in part produced by the movement's decentered, unruly formations, ones expressed in a voluminous archive that resists certain narrative forms. See chapter 4 of this book.

22. The IRB was alternatively called the Irish Revolutionary Brotherhood, a multiple naming that speaks to the ambivalence of Fenian politics toward the state formation that the term "republic" implied. This double naming also expresses the decentered quality of the movement(s) that eschewed not only the centralized logic of hierarchy and traditional representational politics, but indeed the singular, centered logic of the name.

23. For discussion and documentation of the social composition of the IRB, see Newsinger 29. His assessment is supported by historians such as Quinlivan and Rose, Tom Garvin, and Liz Curtis. In addition, Desmond Ryan cites a letter from James Stephens, one of the founders of the IRB, in which he describes the organization as one that found its support primarily from "laborers and tradesmen . . . and the sons of peasants." *The Fenian Chief: A Biography of James Stephens* (Dublin: M. H. Gill, 1967), 80.

in numerous forms of political action. Indeed, Fenianism combined various, seemingly opposed, forms of anticolonial strategy; for example, the revolutionary advocation of 'physical force' and preparation for militarized resistance, nonviolent forms of activism, republican gestures such as the creation of an Irish currency, forms of cultural nationalism such the publication of nationalist writing, and serious engagement with other forms of radicalism including the First International and anticolonial insurgency in other areas of the British Empire. In his notes for a lecture that he delivered to the First International in 1869, Marx described the movement as possessing a variety of characteristics that distinguished it from previous forms of Irish anticolonialism and nationalism: it was lower-class, even socialist, in its composition; it was not Catholic but secular; it did not have a representative in the British Parliament (in other words, Fenians resisted traditional statist or representative politics); and it possessed multiple fields of action (Ireland, America, England, and other sites throughout the Empire) and could thus be described as a global or internationalist movement.[24]

One productive way to think about early Fenianism is as a form of insurgency not adequately described or fully encompassed by the term 'nationalism.' While the movement certainly employed some of the methods of mainstream or bourgeois nationalism, other of its strategies are more aptly described as radical or simply as anticolonial. One could also say that the Fenianism of the 1850s and 1860s had a complex relationship to modernity. In other words, Fenianism of course emerged out of the conditions of modernity, was shaped by them, and replicated some of modernity's central forms in its praxis. At the same time, its practices and politics resisted those aspects of modernity and modernization that foreclosed the possibilities of human freedom and rendered nationalist or anticolonial politics ineffective and less liberatory. Fenianism also provided alternatives to and critiques of colonial modernity. Consequently, Fenianism can be described as structured by a series of contradictions. To describe Fenianism in terms of contradiction does not deny that the movement was highly organized or uniquely effective. Rather, these contradictions signal the ways in which Fenianism had a complex relationship to some of the formations central to modernity: Empire, Capital, nationalism, and in particular the state form. Such contradictions, I would argue, signal important attributes of Fenianism that drew the attention of the state and the consideration of British politicians and political theorists such as Mill and Arnold.

24. "Notes for an Undelivered Speech on Ireland" (1867), in *Ireland and the Irish Question* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1971), 134.

Without a doubt, we can distinguish Fenianism from other forms of Irish anticolonialism and nationalism, and identify what gives it a nuanced, paradoxical relationship to and critique of modernity, by its relationship to the state form. Here, David Lloyd's groundbreaking work on nationalism is most useful, for the movement unified some statist structures of nationalism with those that we might identify with a "nationalism against the state."[25] Following Heather Laird's recent critique of Lloyd, I would suggest that the double nature of Fenianism is in fact what made the movement groundbreaking politically and tactically.[26] Fenianism's politics and structure often resisted reproducing certain fundamental forms of the imperial state in its own organization; however, it mimicked and engaged with the state where and when doing so was tactically effective and allowed for its politics to develop on a mass scale and to address multiple political agendas. This malleability allowed the IRB of the 1860s to be highly organized but simultaneously decentered, to reach much of the population of Ireland with its political message while remaining opaque to the British state, and to be highly successful without always being co-opted by the forms of the imperial state. For example, while Fenians named the capture of the state as one of their goals, they espoused guerilla warfare as a primary tactic and refused any engagement with parliamentary activism or other legal channels of the British state, a politics associated with constitutional nationalisms.

Consider also the IRB's political structure. It had a hierarchical organization with visible leaders and a widely circulated newspaper, yet it was also secret, oath bound, and had a cellular structure, a mode of organization derived from French and Italian revolutionary societies as well as Irish agrarian subaltern movements. Thus, despite the presence of leaders, which seemed to signify a 'top-down' structure, its form of organization simultaneously resisted centralized hierarchy that might make it both vulnerable to the British state's repression and less able to combine with other politics, movements, and forms of resistance. Historian Leon Ò Broin describes the movement's complex system of "circles." Each had in theory "a membership of over 800 but in

25. Lloyd, "Nationalisms Against the State," in *Ireland after History.* My understanding of Fenianism is deeply indebted to Lloyd's work in this essay.

26. Laird writes, "What is of particular interest in Lloyd's notion of non-statist nationalisms, which, with perhaps the exception of 'protonationalisms,' invariably turn out to be nationalisms which may have an interest in the state but combine this interest with a strong social and economic agenda, is that it is in this very search that Lloyd, often by default, comes closest to the notion of a nationalism capable of radically transforming the state." *Subversive Law in Ireland, 1879–1920: From "unwritten law" to Dail Courts* (Dublin: Four Courts, 2005), 159. While I find this description generative in describing Fenianism, I disagree with Laird that Lloyd identifies such nationalisms "by default" and find that his work opens up the possibility for exploring such transformative movements.

practice a circle sometimes consisted of 2000 men, all of them sworn in individually by their immediate superior officer, the idea being, though it was not always realized, that they should know nobody outside their own section" (2). Ò Broin demonstrates that Fenian organization was radically decentralized, in part to resist infiltration by the British police through the use of informers. In an 1868 essay, "How to Deal with Fenianism," George Sigerson noted the problem that this structure posed for counterinsurgency, describing the movement as "hydra-headed" and explaining: "Its mode of government is not from above downwards, but from beneath upwards. Its root cannot be severed at a single stroke, for it does not spring from one or two principal men, but arises by some thousands of inconspicuous rootlets."[27]

As a result, Fenianism created a widespread network that attained a degree of opacity that astonished even its members; for instance, IRB leaders travelling through Ireland sometimes came upon local groups of Fenians that were completely unknown to them.[28] This Fenian power structure proved of great advantage in resisting new state technologies of power, particularly those that relied on centralized logics such as internment, interrogation, and identification.[29] But this structure also allowed Fenianism to penetrate the colonial state. Irish subjects serving in the British military, police force, and even government positions were sworn in as Fenians and then operated relatively independently of IRB organizers. Thus while the IRB refused engagement with the legal channels of the British state, it engaged with the state by extralegal means—through infiltration or what we might call counterstate practices. Fenianism found ways to make use of the state without being co-opted by it.

This grassroots form of organization meant that central leadership was often rendered irrelevant to local cells of the organization, and this allowed them to maintain productive relations with diverse politics and movements—the Brotherhood of St. Patrick, artisans' unions, agrarian insurgencies,[30] and the First International[31]—without necessarily subsuming them within a nationalist imperative. While the end of British rule and an independent Ireland were Fenianism's primary political goals, the movement, unlike strictly constitutional nationalism, was involved in radical social politics, including

27. Seamus Deane, ed., *The Field Day Anthology of Irish Literature* (Derry: Field Day, 1991), 244–45.

28. Owen Dudley Edwards, "Irish Nationalism," in *Celtic Nationalism,* ed. Gwynfor Evans, Ioan Rhys, and Hugh MacDiarmid (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1968), 152.

29. Tom Garvin, *Nationalist Revolutionaries in Ireland, 1858–1928* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1987).

30. Newsinger 30.

31. See Quinlivan and Rose, and Newsinger, as well as primary documents collected in Marx and Engels.

land agitation and working-class radicalism.[32] The IRB's investment in these other political movements and causes also led it to take the form of a distinctly internationalist nationalism[33] and to exist as a "cooperative form of resistance" that combined elements of the modern and nonmodern and that was "neither elite nor subaltern."[34]

At the same time, the movement's politics could often remain 'local' in important ways. Fenianism had much in common with agrarian insurrectionary movements in Ireland, such as the Whiteboys, the Defenders, and Ribbonism. James Joyce once observed that "Irish nationalism is characterised by 'a double struggle'—the anti-imperial struggle, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, an internal struggle, 'perhaps no less bitter,' between constitutional nationalism and a dissident, insurrectionary tradition beginning with the Whiteboys and passing through to the Fenian (IRB) movement."[35] Joyce places Fenianism in a historical continuum of such subaltern movements because it was the first mass movement that allowed for profound interarticulations of often polarized insurrectionary traditions. During the 1860s, the IRB proved the first mass politics in Ireland whose membership was composed of not only urban but rural working classes, members who brought their practices of agrarian insurrection into local Fenian units.[36]

As one might guess, Fenianism had a similarly complex relationship to the politics of identity that had emerged from Irish nationalist movements earlier in the nineteenth century. Of "nationalisms against the state," Lloyd writes, "The possibility of nationalism against the state lies in the recognition of the excess of the people over the nation, and in the understanding that it is, beyond itself, within the very logic of nationalism as a political phenomenon to open and mobilize alternative formations."[37] Fenianism contended openly with "the excess of the people over the nation" rather than dissolving that excess in the state form and a unitary national subject. Fenianism remained invested in avoiding attempts to posit a homogeneous, unitary national identity as the basis for a future independent Ireland. While O'Connellite Repeal politics had formulated an Irish Catholic identity and Young Ireland had attempted to undo such sectarianism with a cultural and sometimes racialist understanding of Irishness, Fenianism took a more complicated stance. While

32. Quinlivan and Rose as well as Newsinger document thoroughly the political articulation of Fenianism and working-class radicalism.

33. Young, *Postcolonialism* 305. See also Newsinger 25 and Quinlivan and Rose 6.

34. Laird 170.

35. Cited in Gibbons, "Identity without a Centre," in *Transformations in Irish Culture* 146.

36. Newsinger 29.

37. Ibid. 36.

some Fenian writings express a less than critical acceptance of an idea of racial essence both transmitted by blood and communicable through residence, others argue that what binds all those called "Irish" is really British prejudice, the anti-Irish ideology of colonialism. This understanding of Irish identity leads to a vision of a more radical national heterogeneity that supplements and resists homogenizing nationalist impulses.[38]

Given the constitution of the various organizations that made up the larger Fenian movement, some rejection of identity politics and of an easy articulation of 'the people' was inevitable. As I have argued, Irish subjects inhabited a peculiar status during the period of Union, interpellated simultaneously as citizen-subjects of the British state and as colonized subjects denied the rights and protections of the British constitution. In addition, Fenians—some born and living in Ireland, some first- and second-generation immigrants to England and the United States,[39] some transported to Australia and other penal colonies, others living throughout the British Empire while serving in the armed forces, some circulating on the Continent—inhabited other conflicting positions as citizens and subjects. The demography of Fenianism was shaped by the diasporic movements and dislocations of Irish subjects as immigrants, migrants, and transportees, one of the legacies of British colonialism. Many Irish Fenians, who were British subjects, spent extensive time in the United States, organizing, raising funds, and receiving military training through fighting in the Civil War (usually on the side of the Union); these Fenians who resided in the United States for extended periods of time had immigration status that was murky at best. Hence, Fenianism might again be described as an internationalist nationalism, an Irish politics that viewed Ireland from multiple locations and positions of identity.

The decentered, unstable identity of many Fenian insurgents confounded the British state in its attempts to identify Fenians circulating into England[40] and to bring Fenians before the law under a stable codification of insurrectionary offenses and of legal jurisdiction. The suspension of habeas corpus in 1865 in response to the possibility of a Fenian rising led to a mass internment of unconvicted suspected Fenians in Irish and British jails, some held without trial on suspicion of treason-felony or sedition for up to two years.

38. For more on these questions in Fenian writings, see chapter 4.

39. The IRB was particularly reliant on Civil War veterans of Irish descent, many of whom, although U.S. citizens, returned to Ireland and traveled to England to volunteer their military expertise through the training of recruits and involvement in acts of insurgency such as the attempted Chester Castle raid, the Manchester van rescue, and the bombing of Clerkenwell Prison.

40. See Quinlivan and Rose for numerous descriptions of police attempts to establish a particular accent or "look" by which to identify potential Fenians preparing for acts of insurgency in England.

Ireland and Britain were legislated as exceptional spaces, no longer structured by the rights supposedly guaranteed by the state, but existing in a perpetual "state of emergency" and subject to forms of martial law. But this "war on terror" ground to a halt when faced with Irish subjects whose legal status made the charges of treason-felony or sedition impossible—Irish-Americans and those mobile subjects whose citizenship could not be easily determined. How could such Fenians be held under suspicion of or charged with treason-felony or sedition when they owed no allegiance to the British crown? The British state quickly responded by attempting to refigure and to extend its power in an Atlantic context. For example, lawyers for the British state engaged in unsuccessful legal arguments charging U.S. Fenians with sedition against the British crown, thereby constructing America as an extension of British national space.[41] They argued specifically for international recognition of a category called "perpetual allegiance" that reconstructed the status of all immigrants as subject to the laws of and owing allegiance to two states, the state of their origin and that to which they had emigrated. In an article published in the *Times* in 1867, an anonymous writer, Historicus, even called for an international code of citizenship to remedy the particular problems raised by Fenianism.[42] In a series of articles in the *Irishman* in 1867, Irish nationalists responded by pointing out the irony that "[a]ccording to the doctrine of perpetual allegiance, the American commonwealth is a congregation of subjects stolen from other states."[43]

This example serves to demonstrate one of the ways in which the British state transformed itself in relation to these anomalous and contradictory qualities of Fenianism. Most strikingly, legitimated state violence against Irish insurgency intensified. Those fundamental rights of citizenship guaranteed by the British constitution—including the right to bear arms, habeas corpus, and the codes of search and seizure—were suspended in Ireland. Martial law and an enduring state of emergency became central to the mid-Victorian state that administered the United Kingdom. Fenians were expelled legislatively from the category of citizenship, a phenomenon that, as we shall see in the next chapter, was mirrored in and justified by discourses describing Fenians as "terrorist" anticitizens. The state defended its actions with the rhetoric of protectionism, promising defense and safety to its subjects throughout the United Kingdom. The paternalist state came to rely further

41. Quinlivan and Rose 127.

42. The *Times,* December 11, 1867. For a brief discussion of this article, see Hall, McClelland, and Rendall, "Introduction," *Defining the Victorian Nation* 57.

43. The *Irishman* (Dublin), January 11, 1867.

on ideologies of counterinsurgency and imperialist nationalism as part of its transformation during the 1860s. These ideological formations rationalized state violence, secured Union, and produced the obedience of citizen-subjects across the divisions of class and cultural difference. As we will see, the mid-Victorian state began to hegemonize Britons, in particular the proletariat, through the ideology and practices of counterinsurgency against Fenianism. In this sense, the state response to Fenianism offered a double remedy—to the crisis of Reform agitation and class conflict in Britain as well as to the new forms of insurgency present by Fenianism. Liberal political theorists worked to develop new visions of a strong and expansive state apparatus that might deal effectively with both of these vital forms of resistance to its power.

"FLOG THE RANK AND FILE"

READING FENIANISM AND COUNTERINSURGENCY IN THE WRITINGS OF MATTHEW ARNOLD

Matthew Arnold's *Culture and Anarchy* stands as a profoundly influential Victorian theorization of the relationship between culture, nation, and the state. Critics on the left, notably Raymond Williams, have emphasized the important place of anarchy in Arnoldian conceptions of culture and the state. For example, the Hyde Park riots stimulated Arnold's consideration of how culture, working in tandem with a strong state—or, as Williams puts it, "excellence and humane values on the one hand; discipline and where necessary repression on the other"—might produce a renewed national consensus that would ameliorate potentially destructive class conflict.[44]

Postcolonial Studies has supplemented this work by insisting on the colonialist politics of Arnold's text. For example, Edward Said reminds us of the forms of colonial anarchy that inform Arnold's project in *Culture and Anarchy:*

> Most modern readers of Matthew Arnold's anguished poetry, or of his celebrated theory in praise of culture, do not also know that Arnold connected the administrative massacre ordered by Eyre with tough British policies toward colonial *Eire* and strongly approved both . . . and what Arnold had to say about culture was specifically believed to be a deterrent to rampant disorder—colonial, Irish, domestic. Jamaicans, Irishmen, and women, and some

44. "A Hundred Years of Culture and Anarchy," in *Problems in Materialism and Culture* (London: Verso, 1980), 8.

> historians, bring up these massacres at 'inappropriate' moments, but most Anglo-American readers of Arnold remain oblivious, see them—if they look at them at all—as irrelevant to the more important cultural theory that Arnold appears to be promoting for all the ages.[45]

By emphasizing the historical specificity of Arnold's theory of culture, Said reframes Arnoldian culture as a prophylactic against colonial anarchy as well as the Hyde Park riots.[46] It is striking that the descriptive "Irish" in Said's list is sandwiched uncomfortably between the terms "colonial" and "domestic." The troubles produced by Irish anticolonial struggle existed at the interface between clearly domestic issues, such as the Reform League agitation, and more geographically distant, nonetheless pressing questions of colonial domination raised by the Morant Bay rebellion and the ensuing Governor Eyre controversy. As evidenced by the cartoon with which this chapter began, Fenianism serves as a hinge between these forms of anarchy, revealing their articulation in larger questions about state power and the legitimacy of counter-insurgent violence.

The editorial history of *Culture and Anarchy* allows us to uncover the pivotal place of Fenianism in Arnold's vision of the state, specifically to excavate that which was repressed during the series of publications that led to the final edition of the text. *Culture and Anarchy* originally appeared as a series of articles in the *Cornhill* magazine in early 1867, the first of which was titled "Culture and Its Enemies," followed by subsequent essays titled "Anarchy and Authority."[47] The transformation and conflation of these titles in the first collected edition has been frequently noted. Less often explored is what to make of Arnold's choice to submerge two key points of analysis—culture's "enemies" and the question of "authority"—which nonetheless remain integral to his vision of culture and the state.

In the case of the "enemies" of culture, this term—which refers to Reform demonstrators and Fenian insurgents—is dissolved by Arnold into the more general category of "anarchy." The change in language shifts emphasis away

45. *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Knopf, 1993), 130–31.

46. Said builds on his generative reading of Arnold in "Secular Criticism," in which he argues that for Arnold, "culture is a system of exclusions legislated from above but enacted throughout its polity, by which such things as anarchy, disorder, irrationality, inferiority, bad taste, and immorality are identified, then deposited outside the culture and kept there by the power of the State and its institutions." Hence the central project of nation-building to Arnold's ideas of culture and the state. *The World, the Text and the Critic* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983), 11.

47. For a comprehensive account of the publishing history of *Culture and Anarchy,* see the critical and explanatory notes by R. H. Super, *The Complete Prose Works of Matthew Arnold,* vol. 5 (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1973), 408–17.

from state violence in its military and disciplinary forms and from an explicit avowal of counterinsurgent force in relation to its specific objects. Instead, the abstract notion of "anarchy" accentuates the harmonizing and hegemonic functions of the state. This obscures the central presence of state violence in *Culture and Anarchy* and allows for the kinds of readings that Said criticizes above—those champions of Arnold's vision who ignore his insistence that the sweetness and light of culture must be supplemented by a strong state and that agitation, however justified, must be "unflinchingly forbidden and repressed."[48] Similarly, the repression of the term "authority" reminds us that, while Arnold presents culture as a means by which to produce consent, it is never separate from the coercion and violence that assert "authority" and secure sovereignty.

The haunting of *Culture and Anarchy* by state violence becomes even more obvious when we look at Arnold's revision of the text's conclusion between the first and second editions of the book. In the first edition, explaining how he has derived his vision of a strong state, Arnold writes:

> . . . whoever administers it [the framework of society, the State], and however we may seek to remove them from the tenure of administration, yet, while they administer, *we steadily and with undivided heart support them in repressing anarchy and disorder; because without order there can be no society,* and without society there can be no human perfection. With me, indeed, this rule of conduct is hereditary. I remember my father, in one of his unpublished letters written more than forty years ago, when the political and social state of the country was gloomy and troubled . . . ends thus: "*As for rioting, the old Roman way of dealing with that is always the right one; flog the rank and file, and fling the ringleaders from the Tarpeian Rock!*" And this opinion we can never forsake . . . (my emphases, *CA* 135)

This passage was excised from the second edition and most subsequent reprintings of the text, and the peculiar history of its expurgation is important in several respects. The citation of his father's letter emphasizes in rather graphic fashion the central place of violent repression in Arnold's vision of the modern state. The paternal text offers a vivid representation of the forms of violence and death to which the insurgent's body will be subject. Thomas

48. Throughout this chapter, I cite the edition of *Culture and Anarchy* edited by Samuel Lipman (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1994), 135, original emphasis. This edition reproduces the 1869 first edition of the text, which contains passages that Arnold expurgated in later versions. Henceforth, *Culture and Anarchy* will be cited in the text as *CA*.

Arnold's invocation of "the old Roman way" is also important, for Matthew's father is best known as a scholar of Anglo-Saxonism who elaborated a racialist narrative of historical cycles of empire in which Britain was the heir to Rome.[49] The son's representation of the repressive function of the state (a crucial element in the hegemonic, ethical state, a mix of "fire and strength" and "sweetness and light") finds its model in the father's imperialist history that cites Rome as the historical precedent for British global domination.

The textual history of this passage also mirrors the operation of the mid-Victorian state in that the paternal rule of law is asserted only to be quickly disavowed. The excision of the passage does not signal that Arnold really rejects state violence. Rather it remains central to his text, but is stripped of its brutality, is recast as reluctantly necessary in the face of resistance, is posited as reactive in nature rather than the originary basis of power. Replacing the stark invocation of "the old Roman way" are narratives in which the state resorts to violence when all else fails; brutality, however lamentable, is made necessary by the anarchic actions of those who resist or are inaccessible to the consent produced by culture. In a way then, Arnold's vision of the state echoes the cartoon with which we began, "Rebellion Had Bad Luck," in which brutal violence and the transgression of the law in the name of counterinsurgency is refigured as a simple, inevitable act of expulsion that consolidates the safety and order of the nation.

The graphic violence of the paternal rule of law is replaced by a more vague insistence on how culture's ameliorative function must be supplemented by and institutionalized through the state. In other words, for national culture to do its ideological work, it must be afforded stability that can only be provided by a strong state claiming to represent the will of the national populace. For example, in an often-quoted passage, Arnold argues:

> . . . we are in danger of drifting towards anarchy. We have not the notion, so familiar on the continent and in antiquity, of *the State*—the nation, in its collective and corporate character, entrusted with stringent powers for the general advantage of controlling individual wills in the name of an interest wider than that of individuals.[50]

This idea of the state exists in an inextricable union with Arnold's idea of culture as "the best which had been thought and done." Eventually, Arnold states

49. George W. Stocking, *Victorian Anthropology* (New York: Free Press, 1987), 37 and 62.
50. Original emphasis, *CA* 50–51.

boldly, "We want an authority, and we find nothing but jealous classes, checks, and a dead-lock; culture suggests the idea of *the State*. We find no basis for a firm State-power in our ordinary selves; culture suggests one to us in our *best self*" (*CA* 65). At the heart of *Culture and Anarchy* stands the argument that the state must suppress and expunge all forms of anarchy, while culture and the enculturating state establish a hegemonic process of the formation of consenting citizen-subjects by which anarchy is defused.

The expurgated assertion of the paternal rule of law is also significant because it identifies implicitly a specific object for state violence in *Culture and Anarchy*. The passage's descriptions recall the colonial state's repression of Fenianism in 1866 and 1867. Irish soldiers serving in the British army who were suspected of Fenian activity were flogged publicly and court-martialed, while Fenian leaders convicted of treason-felony were sentenced to decades of hard labor, transported (or "flung") to the far reaches of the Empire, or publicly executed. Such extreme tactics of counterinsurgency were quite different from the state's response to British radicals such as Hyde Park rioters who were in general imprisoned rather than subject to violent discipline or death. In Arnold's conclusion, paternal authority, the law of the father if you will, provides the model for the state's rule of law, and the violence specific to that power is described with the particular tactics of counterinsurgency employed against Fenians in the United Kingdom.

While the specific violence against Fenian bodies disappeared from the text in the second edition, the Fenian remains a crucial example of the kind of assertion of personal liberty against which the state must act in the name of national interest. Fenianism appears as an object that rationalizes a strong state and in relation to which the modern Arnoldian state defines itself. Arnold writes:

> There are many things to be said on behalf of this exclusive attention of ours to liberty, and of the relaxed habits of government which it has engendered. It is very easy to mistake or to exaggerate the sort of anarchy from which we are in danger through them. We are not in danger from Fenianism, fierce and turbulent as it may show itself; for against this our conscience is free enough to let us act resolutely and put forth our overwhelming strength the moment there is any real need for it. In the first place, it never was any part of our creed that the great right and blessedness of an Irishman, or, indeed, of anyone on earth except an Englishman, is to do as he likes; and we can have no scruple at all about abridging, if necessary, a non-Englishman's assertion of personal liberty. The British constitution, its checks, and its prime virtues, are for Eng-

> lishmen. We may extend them to others out of love and kindness; but we find no real divine law written on our hearts constraining us so to extend them. And then the difference between an Irish Fenian and an English rough is so immense, and the case, in dealing with the Fenian, so much more clear! He is so evidently desperate and dangerous, a man of a conquered race, a Papist, with centuries of ill-usage to inflame him against us, with an alien religion established in his country by us at his expense, with no admirations of our institutions, no love of our virtues, no talents for our business, no turn for our comfort! Show him our symbolical Truss Manufactory on the finest site in Europe, and tell him that British industrialization and individualism can bring a man to that, and he remains cold! Evidently if we deal tenderly with a sentimentalist like this, it is out of pure philanthropy. But with the Hyde Park rioter how different! He is framed by nature to do as we do, hate what we hate, love what we love; he is capable of feeling the symbolical force of the Truss Manufactory; the question of questions, for him, is a wages' question. (*CA* 53–54)

Here Arnold clearly ironizes the British ideal of liberty, a critique with which he is preoccupied throughout this chapter. This "national love for the assertion of personal liberty" (*CA* 53) has led to events such as the Hyde Park riots of 1866, during which the working class "beg[an] to assert and put in practice an Englishman's right to do what he likes; his right to march where he likes, meet where he likes, enter where he likes, hoot as he likes, threaten as he likes, smash as he likes" (*CA* 52). Therefore, Arnold's strong state serves as a corrective of a rights-based ideology of individualism that tends toward forms of "anarchy," the descriptive that Arnold uses to depoliticize and delegitimize popular protest and radical agitation. Elsewhere he identifies "the Hyde Park rough" as lacking an "idea of the State, of the nation in its collective and corporate character controlling, as government, the free swing of this or that one of its members in the name of the higher reason of all of them, his own as well as that of others" (*CA* 54). According to Arnold, the dominant British ideology of individual liberty has disrupted the consensus of the nation as well as its foundational condition of 'law and order.'

As suffrage was extended, Reform legislation absorbed those unruly subjects or "roughs" into the boundaries of citizenry; the state and its attendant ideology had to be transformed accordingly. Bourgeois individualism must be supplemented, even displaced, by the production of citizen-subjects who would relinquish the particularity of individual interests and rights for an idea

of a larger national community expressed through the state.[51] Arnold hopes that the development of this ethical function of the state will establish hegemony and prevent disruptions such as the Hyde Park riots. As David Lloyd and Paul Thomas have argued, Arnold's conception of the state synthesizes the regulatory and formative functions of the state, an idea marked by the "recogni[tion] that the state cannot operate once the franchise has begun to be extended unless it assumes an ethical function."[52]

However, in this passage on the "Irish Fenian," Arnold makes absolutely clear that the development of a hegemonic state form does not mean that the state relinquishes its coercive powers. In fact, the monopoly of violent repression is the condition of possibility for the emergence of its hegemonic and ethical form. Therefore, Arnold begins by calling attention to "the relaxed habits of government" (*CA* 53) produced by the absence of the idea of the state, and by extension an idea of the collective nation. The valuing of liberty above all else leads not only to anarchy, but to errors in judgment that "mistake" or "exaggerate" the social and political dangers that Britain faces. Arnold offers Fenianism as an example of such an error. In a move reminiscent of our opening cartoon, he declares that "[w]e are not in danger from Fenianism, fierce and turbulent as it may show itself. . . . " With this dismissive gesture, Arnold reverses and undoes the discourse of "panic," "terror," and "danger" concerning Irish nationalism that had begun to saturate the mainstream British press by 1867, a discourse I explore in the next chapter. What allows him to discount the danger of Fenianism and to challenge the psychic power of the idea of a "fierce and turbulent" threat to the British public is the unquestionable repressive function of the state. The state, political representative of the national "we" that forms the subject of the paragraph, neutralizes Fenianism through its right and imperative to "act resolutely and put forth our overwhelming strength." The state's ubiquitous counterinsurgent violence secures the safety of British citizenry from anticolonial resistance within the United Kingdom.[53]

When envisioning this strong state, Arnold makes a clear distinction between the "Irish Fenian" and the "English rough." He elaborates a taxonomy that divides English working-class radicalism from Irish anticolo-

51. Lloyd and Thomas provide a most compelling description of this process in relation to Arnold's work in *Culture and the State,* chapter 4.

52. Ibid. 117.

53. It is important to note that Fenianism introduced acts of anticolonial resistance, specifically tactics of guerilla warfare, into Britain proper. As I will argue in the next chapter, the presence of such insurgency in the imperial center was the context out of which an idea of "terrorism" emerged.

nial nationalism and British citizens from Irish subjects. It operates through numerous categories of difference: race, nation, religion, the experience of Empire, and culture. In the end, the irreducible difference between the Irish and the English insurgent determines whether identification with British culture is possible. The Hyde Park rioter "is framed by nature to do as we do, hate what we hate, love what we love." The shift from the third person to the first plural, that phantasmatic bourgeois "we" against which the proletarian agitator is set, indicates the structure of national synthesis and harmonization that underlies the Arnoldian project of re-envisioning the nation-state through culture. Nature is invoked as the agent that has established an attachment for British civilization in the working-class subject. This affective bond operates across divisions of class interests; thus, as the syntax of the sentence suggests, the absorption of the rioter into "we" exists as an imminent possibility. In contrast, Arnold describes the Irish Fenian's difference as racial and historical; he is "a man of a conquered race." This racial identity is supplemented by Catholicism and a history of colonial conquest that has created an "inflamed" temperament and the absence of an identification with the institutions and culture of Britain.

However, as soon as Arnold makes a stark distinction between the Fenian and the English rough, it falls apart. Not only does Irish difference create Fenian alienation from British culture. British civilization itself fails in this regard. Throughout *Culture and Anarchy,* Arnold critiques the worship and fetishization of mechanism, industrialization, and individualism, which supplant an idea of Culture as "the best which has been thought and known." Arnold's repeated reference to "the symbolic force of the Truss Manufactory" indicates that such a critique is at work in this passage. In light of this larger argument in *Culture and Anarchy,* the cathection of the working classes onto the nation in its contemporary form is questionable; it must be replaced by the kind of state and culture that Arnold sees as lacking. The Fenian's, and by extension the Irish people's, inability to identify with and to assimilate to Britishness is thus produced by the failure of British society, which Arnold later identifies as the disabling overdevelopment of Hebraism, rather than by the unassailable difference of Irishness.

This aspect of Arnold's analysis might seem to suggest that the stark articulation of national and racial difference in this passage is ironic, that he ironizes the difference between "the Irish Fenian" and "the English rough" as a method of critiquing British bourgeois hypocrisy. This is the sort of reading, for example, provided by Stephen Marcus when he argues that Arnold uses the Fenian as a strategic figure, even a sympathetic figure, to reveal the

excesses and inconsistencies of the British ideology of liberty.[54] Indeed, the passage is hyperbolic and parodic, even humorous, in its representation of the "Irish Fenian." However, Marcus's analysis, I would argue, misreads Arnold's use of irony and parody in this passage on Fenianism. In order for parody to operate successfully, it must have a recognizable referent. Arnold's parody of a stark racial, cultural, and religious division between the Irish and English and an attendant bifurcation of insurgency indicates the pervasiveness of that ideological formation in 1867 when he is writing. His use of irony and parody does not necessarily signal a rejection of these discourses. Rather, the ironic register functions to reveal that such distinctions, while pervasive, are useless or even laughable from the particular perspective of the state. Arnold identifies one of the arbitrary limits of the British ideology of individual liberty, but *not* in order to extend the fiction of equality to Irish Fenians. Instead, he insists upon the equality of all forms of anarchy before the law and its enforcing agent, the legitimate violence of the state. The essential difference between the Irish Fenian and the English rough collapses only when it is manifested as anarchy against which the state must act regardless of racial and national difference.

This argument becomes unquestionably clear in Arnold's conclusion to *Culture and Anarchy.* He writes emphatically that even if the cause for agitation seems legitimate: "—still we say no, and that monster processions in the streets and forcible irruptions into the parks, even in professed support of this good design, ought to be *unflinchingly forbidden and repressed*" (my emphasis, *CA* 135). In the first edition, this passage is followed by the expurgated endorsement of "flogging the rank and file." Thus, the figure of the English rough and the Irish Fenian melt together in the imperative to establish the right of the state to suppress anarchy. Through the invocation of the Irish anticolonial insurgent, Arnold can create a kind of self-evidence concerning the state's repression of domestic anarchy. Indeed, by 1867, when Arnold was completing his first edition of *Culture and Anarchy,* state violence against Fenianism had become more or less publicly sanctioned following such acts of "terrorism" as the Clerkenwell bombing.[55] Arnold challenges a taxonomy of national and racial difference through irony in order to show that such distinctions are arbitrary and unimportant in the eyes of the state, which must act equally against anarchy in all forms.

54. "Culture and Anarchy Today," in *CA* 177.

55. The bombing of Clerkenwell Prison in December 1867 was an attempt by the IRB to rescue Fenians imprisoned there. When the amount of gunpowder necessary was miscalculated, the explosion leveled several blocks of a nearby working-class neighborhood, and six people were killed.

Arnold's letters confirm this reading of the Fenian in his theorization of the state. On December 14, 1867, just days after the Clerkenwell bombing and in the midst of completing the articles that would become *Culture and Anarchy,* Arnold wrote to his mother:

> Everyone is full of the Clerkenwell blow-up; I was dining at the Garrick Club last night, when one of the guests came in saying that his hansom had been nearly knocked down by a string of cabs with policemen filling them inside and out, hurrying to Clerkenwell, which has been blown up by Fenians. Later in the evening the newspaper came in and we learnt what had really happened. You know I never wavered in saying that the Hyde Park business eighteenth months ago was fatal, and that a Government which dared not deal with a mob, *of any nation or with any design,* simply opened the floodgates to anarchy. *You cannot have one measure for Fenian rioting and another for English rioting, merely because the design of Fenian rioting is more subversive and desperate; what the State has to do is to put down all rioting with a strong hand, or it is sure to drift into troubles.* Who can wonder at these Irish, who have cause to hate us, and who do not own their allegiance to us, *making war on a State and society which has shown itself irresolute and feeble?*[56]

If the letter from his father expresses Arnold's commitment to a coercive state, the letter to his mother illuminates the appearance of Fenianism in *Culture and Anarchy.* The Clerkenwell bombing becomes the occasion for his lament over the British state's failure to perform its repressive function in the case of Hyde Park. For Arnold, this failure is one of the conditions of possibility for such "Fenian rioting," which recognizes that the state is "irresolute and feeble" and therefore has no fear of reprisal.[57] Hyde Park is the originary cause of all subsequent rioting, for it "opened the floodgates to anarchy." In the letter, the two forms of protest—Irish and English, colonial and domestic—collapse into each other as the word "rioting" is used repetitively to describe them both. Arnold then starkly declares the equality of all forms of anarchy before the law. He reworks the discourse of equality as articulated by Reform agitators who demanded universal suffrage, recuperating this concept for the state as a mode of legitimating official violence. It is important to note

56. My emphases, *Letters of Matthew Arnold, 1848–1888,* vol. 1, ed. George W. E. Russell (New York: Macmillan and Co., 1896), 437–38.

57. Philip Schlesinger argues that this theory of the strong state as preventative is central to modern ideologies of counterterrorism. *Media, State, and Nation: Political Violence and Collective Identities* (London: Sage, 1991), 79–81. Suggestively, Schlesinger insists that this ideological formation emerges from the history of European colonial expansion and domination (67).

that he leaves room for a difference between Fenianism and Reform League agitation, noting that Irish nationalism is "more subversive and desperate." From the perspective of the state, however, such difference is recognized but deemed irrelevant, as repression must be unequivocal in both cases.

An intertextual reading of *Culture and Anarchy* and Arnold's Clerkenwell letter exposes the function of Fenianism in his theorization of the mid-Victorian state. Invoking the Irish Fenian allows Arnold to mobilize middle-class public opinion, which surged after the Clerkenwell bombing in favor of the most violent counterinsurgent state practices against Irish nationalists. Arnold does not ironize the racial and national division between "Irish Fenian" and "English rough" in order to humanize the former but in fact to dehumanize the latter. A logic of equivalence, not equality, between forms of "rioting" extends public panic about Fenianism to the Hyde Park protester. For Arnold, counterinsurgent ideologies and apparatuses that develop in relation to Fenianism become the model for the hegemonic state that he is theorizing. At the same time, the seemingly self-evident criminality of Fenian activities is expanded to encompass all forms of political protest, and state violence against such agitation is constituted as the very foundation of social and political order of the British nation.

Thus, race serves a crucial yet paradoxical function in Arnold's vision of the modern state. Racial difference stands as a primary way through which Irish anticolonial violence is understood, and its invocation serves to incite panic that can then be extended to all forms of protest. In a way, Reform agitation is racialized through its comparison to Fenianism. But simultaneously, the Arnoldian state disregards the importance of race when responding to "anarchy," dissolving all agitation into a single category formed through a fiction of equivalence. The discourse of race remains, however. It is not simply a foil that allows Arnold to imagine an effectively repressive British state. By turning to Arnold's other writings on Ireland, I will demonstrate how the state envisioned by Arnold is fundamentally racist as well as Unionist. Arnold's vision of the equivalence of insurgent subjects before the law is an expression of a committed Unionist politics, one that recognizes that Hyde Park rioters and Fenians are equally bound by their common position as legal subjects and potential citizens of the United Kingdom. This equivalence functions as the guarantor of ubiquitous and unassailable state power. Still, the Union whose interests that state serves is imagined by Arnold as the amalgamation of the racially distinct populations of those regions called "the British Isles" all under English-Teutonic imperial and cultural domination. While the seeming dissolution of race is the lynchpin for the legitimation of

state violence, the persistence of race becomes the way that Arnold understands the state that secures the existence of the "United Kingdom." Race, particularly racialist and racist ways of understanding Irish national character and anticolonial violence, serves as an instrumental category in the modern hegemonic state in mid-Victorian Britain.[58]

THE ARNOLDIAN STATE, UNIONISM, AND THE FUNCTION OF RACE IN STATE FORMATION

In the corpus of Arnold's writings, the text most closely related to *Culture and Anarchy* is *On the Study of Celtic Literature,* essays derived from a series of lectures he gave at Oxford in late 1865 and early 1866. Arnold was beginning work on what would become *Culture and Anarchy* while he was revising *Celtic Literature* for its serialization in *The Cornhill* in 1866,[59] suggesting an intellectual interdependence between the two works. Even a most cursory reading of *On the Study of Celtic Literature* makes apparent the presence of a racialism that grounds Arnold's theorization of the relations between Saxon and Celt. As David Cairns and Shaun Richards argue in one of the first sustained attempts to bring postcolonial theory to bear on Irish literature, Arnold develops a discourse of Celticism, derivative of Ernest Renan's *The Poetry of the Celtic Races,* which, through an amalgamation of philology, ethnology, racial anthropology, and an emerging science of sexuality, imagined the essential racial character of the Celt as sentimental, "gay," sensual, feminine, and unsuited to modern politics since he [*sic*] is, in Arnold's often-quoted words "always ready to react against the despotism of fact."[60] This racial imaginary allows Arnold to argue that all Celtic populations are incapable of political expression in the form of an independent modern nation-state and representational government. Describing "the Celt's failure to reach any material civilization" (*SCL* 345), Arnold contends that "the Celt has been ineffectual in politics" (*SCL* 346), for "if his rebellion against fact has thus lamed the Celt even in his spiritual work, how much more must it have lamed him in the world of business and politics!" (*SCL* 345). He describes this racial insufficiency as an underdeveloped relation to modernity, one manifested specifically

58. See David Theo Goldberg, *The Racial State* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2002).

59. Super 3:490–94. Super suggests the "kinship" between the two texts, although he does not elaborate (494).

60. 48–49. For Arnold's descriptions of the Celt using these terms, see Super 3:343–45. Henceforth, *On the Study of Celtic Literature* will be cited in the text as *SCL*.

in relation to the state form: "The skillful and resolute appliance of means to ends which is needed both to make progress in material civilisation, and also *to form powerful states,* is just what the Celt has least turn for" (my emphasis, *SCL* 345). The Celt, who as we will see becomes a figure of Irishness, is prone to forms of violent agitation—"undisciplined, anarchical, and turbulent, but out of affection and admiration giving himself body and soul to some leader" (*SCL* 346). Arnold's vision of the Celt exists as part of a larger racist vision of history and nations, one that identifies the capacity for developing powerful nation-states as an index of a population's racial character.[61] While the state becomes the measure of a race's level of civilization, racial inferiority also justifies the imposition of a strong state form to shepherd barbaric populations into modernity.

Throughout *On the Study of Celtic Literature,* Arnold's vision of the Celt is set against a counterpoint: the Saxon racial type. The sentimental, poetic, and feminine Celt is juxtaposed with the Teutonic Saxon temperament: disciplined, having "sense for fact," "strenuous," masculine, and possessing an inherent penchant for institutions such as those of the state as well as the capacity for "rational," modern politics, specifically "measure, law, and guidance." Yet, as in the passage on the Irish Fenian and the English rough in *Culture and Anarchy,* Arnold sets up this stark binary only to undo it to some degree. He posits the antithetical nature of Celt and Teuton in order to renarrate ancient British history and to construct British national identity as composite, made up of various racial elements including "some Celtic vein or other running in us" (*SCL* 336). The Celtic finds its place within Britishness as a potentially productive racial and cultural presence, however, only when clearly circumscribed and politically inert, a mere "vein" in the body politic. Arnold articulates a vision of British national identity predicated on the mutual assimilation of Celt to English and the English to the Celtic; however, as David Lloyd notes, "in the process of assimilation, of course, it is still the case that the Celt will be absorbed into the political English Empire, which in turn will be made more complete by the absorption of what had formerly seemed alien and different."[62] What appears to be reciprocity and an argument for the important place of the Celtic in British national development in fact justifies subordination and domination. This politics is signaled by Arnold's use of the term 'Celtic' rather than 'Irish,' 'Scottish,' or 'Welsh.' Peripheral

61. Young, *Colonial Desire* 55–89. Robert Young has traced the mid-Victorian racialist thought that provided Arnoldian Celticism with its positivistic, scientific underpinnings.

62. Lloyd, *Nationalism and Minor Literature: James Clarence Mangan and the Emergence of Irish Cultural Nationalism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 7–8.

regions of the United Kingdom are conflated and subordinated, reduced to a racial designation (implying ancient genealogy) rather than described as distinct identities that might denote a claim to nationhood.

Arnold's vision of Celtic and Saxon (read English) amalgamation and racial interdependence is Unionist and imperialist. He begins his essay by comparing Wales and the other Celtic peripheries of the United Kingdom to Cornwall, a region of England that, while possessing a distinct language and culture historically, has been naturalized as a seemingly inseparable part of England proper: "no doubt, Cornwall is the better for adopting English, for becoming more thoroughly one with the rest of the country" (*SCL* 296). The rhetorical gesture of claiming "no doubt" signals the extension of a logic of self-evidence concerning the integrity of England to the larger unit of the United Kingdom.

Naturalizing the United Kingdom then allows Arnold to state more boldly:

> The fusion of all the inhabitants of these islands into one homogeneous, English-speaking whole, the breaking down of barriers between us, the swallowing up of separate provincial nationalities, is a consummation to which the natural course of things irresistibly tends; it is a necessity of what is called modern civilisation, and modern civilisation is a real, legitimate force; the change must come, and its accomplishment is a mere affair of time. (*SCL* 296–97)

The language in this passage is worth reading closely. The original image of the fusion or federation of the islands, peoples, and cultures that compose the United Kingdom quickly gives way to a process of homogenization and "swallowing up." The latter phrase suggests a process of consumption and digestion, which intimates the "breaking down or disintegration" of the colonial subject "that is the necessary prelude to his [*sic*] total identification with or absorption into the imperial state."[63] Cultural, linguistic, and racial barriers are not just dismantled, but are subject to material and symbolic violence. Ultimately Arnold insists that the fusion is in fact a "consummation," a telos of progress irresistibly determined by both nature and the forward march of civilization. The invocation of "modern civilization" here is quite self-conscious. Arnold repeats the phrase, calling attention to the power that his invocation summons; civilization is a natural, self-legitimating "force," unquestionable in its authority, compulsory, inevitable.

63. Lloyd, *Nationalism and Minor Literature* 7.

At the end of the essay, the entwined Unionism and imperialism that drives Arnold's interest in the United Kingdom becomes clear. His vision of "civilization" as the motor of history becomes a racialist vision of the absorption of the Celtic into Britain. He commands his reader:

> let us consider that of the shrunken and diminished remains of this great primitive race [the Celts], all, with one significant exception, belongs to the English empire; only Brittany is not ours; we have Ireland, the Scotch Highland, Wales, the Isle of Man, Cornwall. They are a part of ourselves, we are deeply interested in knowing them, they are deeply interested in being known by us. . . . (*SCL* 384)

The "we" addressed here indicates a specifically English not British audience; Arnold, writing in almost Manichean racism, is careful not to conflate or confuse the terms. Those Celtic territories and subjects excluded from this mode of address are represented as imperial possessions and as atavistic remnants of that which is incompatible with modernity. This vision of the Celtic legitimates the unquestionable position of these regions and races as the property of "the English empire." The creation of an integrated United Kingdom is secured by both the progress of civilization and the biology and history of race. This rationalization of Union immediately leads to the question of academic and anthropological knowledge. The English "are deeply interested in knowing them" and the Celts "are deeply interested in being known by us." The reiteration of language here produces an illusion of symmetry and of reciprocal knowledge that is one of the mechanisms of effective empire-building. But the intrusion of the passive tense subverts this illusion. The Celts do not gain knowledge of the English, but must submit to a process of "being known" as the objects rather than subjects of knowledge.

So it is not surprising that this passage serves as a easy segue into Arnold's suggestion that Oxford establish a chair of Celtic literature and cultivate other "facilities for knowing the Celt" (*SCL* 385). This passage reveals the Unionist and imperialist imperative that underlies the championing of such an academic institution; the intimate connection between imperial power and academic knowledge is wholly apparent. The "study" that gives the essay its title is a mode of colonial domination; Celtic cultures are relegated to a residuum that may be contained and objectified, rendered safe in the hands of the English academician and his institutions of higher learning. The Unionism of *Celtic Literature* is thus a thinly veiled politics of conciliation in which the impossibility of political independence and self-determination is compen-

sated for by the assertion that Celtic cultures are worthy of study. In the introduction to the essay, Arnold articulates this: "It is a consoling thought, and one which history allows us to entertain, *that nations disinherited of political success may yet leave their mark on the world's progress, and contribute powerfully to the civilisation of mankind*" (my emphasis, *SCL* 390). Therefore, the study of Celtic literature becomes a strategy for more effective colonization. Celtic cultures are invited into the project of civilization but only through the proscribed structures of the apparatuses of the state (Arnold is emphatic about the role of the government in funding such chairs and archives of Celtic literature) as an object of academic knowledge. And for Arnold, only ancient texts constitute "Celtic literature," which relegates Celtic cultural achievement to the realm of the premodern and denies the possibility of any vital contemporary culture in the Celtic peripheries of the United Kingdom. The technologies of knowledge and power that draw the Celtic into British civilization insist upon its atavism and ensure its depoliticization.

Arnold hopes that such "study" will also produce that bond with British civilization that, in *Culture and Anarchy,* he identified as missing for the Irish:

> Let the Celtic members of this empire consider that they too have to transform themselves; and though the summons to transform themselves be often conveyed harshly and brutally . . . yet that is no reason why the summons should not be followed. . . . Let them consider that they are inextricably bound up with us, and that, if the suggestions in the following pages have any truth, we English, alien and uncongenial to our Celtic partners as we may have hitherto shown ourselves, have notwithstanding, beyond perhaps any other nation, a thousand latent springs of possible sympathy with them. Let them consider that new ideas and forces are stirring in England, that day by day these new ideas and forces gain in power, and that almost everyone of them is the friend of the Celt and not his enemy. (*SCL* 395)

Establishing the institutionalized study of Celtic literature is an imperialist gesture that hopes to inspire mutual sympathy between Celt and English, and to effect a transformation in the Celt that will produce the allegiance necessary to make Union viable. Simultaneously, this institutionalization will alter England through "new ideas and forces," making British society more attractive and congenial to the Celt. Such a transformation will work against the reduction of British civilization to the fetish of the "Truss Manufactory." The vision of a composite British culture in *Celtic Literature* is driven by the

political imperative of imperial Unionism, not Liberal democracy or egalitarianism, and may take place through more violent means. Arnold seeks the formation of "a vital union between him [the Englishman] and the races he has annexed" (*SCL* 392).[64]

There is a specific historical imperative that propels this refashioned vision of Union.[65] The final sentence of *On the Study of Celtic Literature* returns readers to the question of Fenianism and reveals fully the political project that fuels Arnold's proposal for academic study:

> Let us reunite ourselves with our better mind and with the world through science; and let it be one of our angelic revenges on the Philistines, who among their other sins are the guilty authors of Fenianism, to found at Oxford a chair of Celtic, and to send, through the gentle ministration of science, a message of peace to Ireland. (*SCL* 386)

The final word of the essay is "Ireland," making clear that the immediate historical context for Arnold's conciliatory gesture is the outbreak of Fenian resistance in 1865. Celticism gives way to the specificity of the contemporary politics of the Irish question. Arnold's political agenda in the essay is to find a way to neutralize Fenian insurgency by making British culture more attractive. He wishes to demonstrate an interest in things Irish and thereby send "a message of peace to Ireland."

This passage resonates with my earlier reading of *Culture and Anarchy.* The Philistines, bourgeois champions of a misshapen, distorted British culture of industrialism and individualism, are the "guilty authors of Fenianism." This sentence can only be fully understood by returning to the passage on the Irish Fenian, which suggests that British Philistine culture has not made itself sufficiently attractive to the Irish; it is not an adequate foundation for British imperialism and colonialism to succeed in Ireland. At the same time, Arnold's letter on Hyde Park, Clerkenwell, and the state reminds us that the Philistines are also responsible for Fenianism because of their unwillingness

64. This colonialist politics is explicit and consistent throughout Arnold's writing on Ireland, from the texts I have examined through his later writing such as "An Unregarded Irish Grievance," "Irish Catholicism and British Liberalism," "The Incompatibles," and letters written during the 1880s that express his resolute opposition to Home Rule for Ireland in any form.

65. In *Colonial Desire,* Young rarely mentions Fenianism as a relevant context for reading Arnold's writings on Ireland. One can contrast this with Cairns and Richards in *Writing Ireland: Colonialism, Nationalism, and Culture* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988), who see Fenianism as integral to Arnold's thought on Ireland (44).

to repress all forms of anarchy by violent means if necessary. Arnold's insistence on this double responsibility of the British bourgeoisie renders Fenianism a manifestation of the failure of Britain to govern its nation and its colonies properly—through a careful combination of violence (the state) and hegemony (culture).

By analyzing Arnold's argument in *On the Study of Celtic Literature* and his insistence on its relevance to the conjoined projects of suppressing Fenianism and forging an effective Union between Ireland and England, we can return to Arnold's division between "the Irish Fenian" and "the English rough" with greater insight. Despite the irony at work in this section of *Culture and Anarchy,* Arnold is not rejecting the racial differentiation between national characters and forms of anarchy. Rather, race and national character have a central place in his theorization of the state and of culture. The repressive, coercive state demands a leveling of racial and national difference as they pertain to anarchy; insurgents must be equivalent before the law and subject to the same policy of unmitigated counterinsurgency, which Arnold sees as the foundation for orderly society. At the same time, the hegemonic state, or the state operating according to the principles of culture, imagines itself operating in relation to fundamental racial differences that persist within the United Kingdom and the larger Empire. While Arnold hopes for the slow dissolve of these differences through the processes of assimilation as outlined in *Celtic Literature,* only long-term hegemony makes this possible. From the perspective of culture, race cannot be supplanted by a logic of equivalence, but culture and the state apparatuses that enculturate must reimagine a productive and expropriative relation between distinct racial elements.

The Arnoldian theory of culture and the state, "instrumental as well as influential in the forging of a new mode of hegemony"[66] during the 1860s and 1870s, has at its foundation a committed politics of Unionism and imperialism. The state violence that secures the working of culture finds its legitimation in colonial counterinsurgency. The harmonizing function of culture relies upon an imagining of Union as an effective imperial and racial relation based on "love and admiration" rather than simply coercion. For Arnold, the Fenian and Fenianism are the figures that make these theorizations of culture and the state possible. His writings reveal a politics of Unionism, colonialism, and counterinsurgency at the heart of British mid-Victorian Liberalism's understanding of the state.

66. Lloyd and Thomas 118.

THE COUNTER-INSURGENT STATE IN JOHN STUART MILL'S "ENGLAND AND IRELAND"

Historians, political theorists, and literary critics often describe John Stuart Mill as the most progressive intellectual within the current of Victorian Liberalism, placing him at the opposite end of the Liberal spectrum from Matthew Arnold. As the head of the anti-Eyre campaign, a supporter of the Reform League, and a commentator on the subjection of women, he diverges politically from Arnold in many ways. However, as an influential theorist of representative government and the state, Mill displays important points of convergence with the intellectual who might otherwise seem to be his adversary.[67] Looking at Mill's most sustained and important essay on Ireland, "England and Ireland,"[68] alongside Arnold's writings allows us to examine further the ways in which Fenianism is part of the constitutive logic of the British mid-Victorian nation-state, even within apparently divergent articulations of Victorian Liberalism. Mill's proposal of state-administered land reform through fixity of tenure in Ireland provides a lens through which to understand his "liberal justification of empire."[69] I contend that, like Arnold, Mill theorizes a fundamentally violent and counterinsurgent state as the condition of possibility for the continued viability of the United Kingdom to which he is committed. His vision of the state aims simultaneously to appease Irish discontent and to incite in both British and Irish subjects their consent to be represented by and subject to a violent state. This project is underwritten by ideas of progress, paternalism, and security, which are central to securing the obedience of Irish and British subjects but which also underwrite a burgeoning justification of international interventionism that is central to British Liberal modernity. Within this ideological formation, Fenianism, or more generally the problem of Irish anticolonial insurgency, plays a critical

67. David Lloyd and Paul Thomas note that despite the seeming antagonism between Mill and Arnold, their work converges in its contribution to "the emerging dominant paradigm that practically determines the formation of the liberal state in Britain" (120). In addition, Mill and Arnold occupy a similar ideological position as male middle-class intellectuals wielding masculine power and authority to make significant interventions into debates and policymaking around questions of Englishness, colonialism, and the state. Catherine Hall makes this argument concerning Mill and Carlyle in the Governor Eyre controversy in "Competing Masculinities: Thomas Carlyle, John Stuart Mill and the Case of Governor Eyre," in *White, Male, and Middle-Class: Explorations in Feminism and History* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 255–95.

68. In this chapter, I cite the edition of "England and Ireland," in *Essays on England, Ireland, and the Empire,* ed. John M. Robson, vol. 6 of *The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982), 505–42. Henceforth, this edition of the pamphlet will be cited in the text as *EI.*

69. Mehta 2.

role as that which both challenges and justifies the expansion and consolidation of new forms of state power.

By the time that Mill published "England and Ireland" in 1868, he had already elaborated an influential theory of modern representative government, one founded on a fundamental belief in the compatibility of Empire and liberty. For example, *Considerations on Representative Government* (1861)[70] posits the representative democratic state as the ideal form of government, paying particular attention to "the conditions of possibility within the modern state for extended rights to political representation."[71] Examining what makes a people ready for the advanced or "ideal" representative state, Mill presents a stagist model of civilizational progress. As Uday Mehta argues, he "makes representative government contingent on a precisely articulated and specific developmental trajectory."[72] Those societies judged less developed or more backward on this scale require Empire to shepherd them toward readiness for modern forms of government and freedom. The progressive development of nations toward the capacity for self-government finds its metonym in the development of the citizen-subject who is produced by the state and who, through his or her "obedience" or "Progress," is incorporated into the system of representative government. Mill's contribution to Victorian understandings of citizenship and political representation is grounded in a colonialist politics.

The modern state occupies a unique and complex role in Mill's understanding of representational government in a global context. The representative state is presented as the object of all civilized political desire and the telos of all historical and political development. That state, at home or extended abroad as an apparatus of Empire, prepares unready subjects for political representation. This allows Mill to resolve the seeming contradiction between liberty and colonialism.[73] According to Mill, the modern state must sometimes mimic forms that seem antithetical to it, even despotism and violence, in order to function as an agent of progress and civilization. In a British context, this argument justifies the state's monopoly of violence, which he encodes as the principle of "self-protection" that always constitutes the limit of liberty. In the case of colonialism, he writes, "There are, as we have already seen, conditions of society in which a vigorous despotism is in itself the best

70. *The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill,* vol. 19, *Essays on Politics and Society,* vol. 2, ed. John M. Robson (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977).

71. Lloyd and Thomas 121.

72. Mehta 73.

73. Mehta passim.

mode of government for training the people in what is specifically wanting to render them capable of a higher civilization."[74] Here despotic colonial rule is rewritten as a necessary relation of tutelage. I call this "the colonial fiction of the transitional stage," a ruse in which state violence and domination are presented as transitory and transformative rather than as permanent features of the colonial relation. This ruse presents "despotism" as an unavoidable state of exception when in fact it exists as the rule and foundation of Empire's power.

By 1868, Mill was ready to apply this political vision to the specific case of Ireland. The resulting essay, "England and Ireland," was the culmination of Mill's attempts to address the Irish question through proposed land reform. In a series of editorials published in the *Morning Chronicle* in 1846 during the Irish famine and again in *Principles of Political Economy* (1848), Mill had criticized the economic exploitation produced by absentee landlords and advocated a gradual transformation to a system of peasant proprietorship as well as measures such as resettling populations on unreclaimed land and the redistribution of property in Ireland. He hoped that such a plan might remedy those dysfunctional power relations that he believed contributed to various forms of distress in Ireland, such as famine and overpopulation, while at the same time capitalizing the Irish agricultural economy to a certain degree.[75]

What distinguishes "England and Ireland" from his earlier writings is that for the first time Mill would finally advocate openly that which he had resisted promoting previously—what Lebow calls "the total restructuring of the Irish economy by the [British] state."[76] In other words, he makes the novel proposal of "a real revolution in the economical and social constitution of Ireland" (*EI* 519) secured through state intervention, more specifically massive, unmitigated intervention to administer peasant proprietorship of the land and to transform Anglo–Irish colonial relations. As a contemporaneous commentator suggests, his proposal for fixity of tenure "turns the state into a huge collecting power."[77] Mill had previously shied away from envisioning such a plan. This shift in his position was occasioned by the acts of Fenian insurgency that occurred in Britain in the two years before the publication of "England and Ireland." Indeed, in the first few pages of the pamphlet, he identifies Fenian-

74. Cited from *On Liberty,* in ibid. 106.

75. For a useful review of the history of Mill's thought concerning Ireland, see Richard Ned Lebow, "Introduction," *John Stuart Mill on Ireland* (Philadelphia: Institute for the Study of Human Issues, 1979). For a review of Mill's relative sympathy for the Irish peasantry, see Pitts 146–48.

76. Lebow, "Introduction" 7.

77. Cited in Bruce L. Kinzer, *England's Disgrace? J. S. Mill and the Irish Question* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 192.

ism as the force that has destroyed British complacency about Ireland and has engendered a need for some kind of immediate action to quell anticolonial rebellion and to protect British citizens.[78]

Mill's pamphlet was enormously influential on mid- and late Victorian parliamentary debates about land reform in Ireland.[79] The text was discussed in the House of Commons and served as a point of reference in debates about Irish matters for years to come.[80] While the pamphlet was read by many of Mill's contemporaries as sympathetic to Fenianism,[81] in fact the text's primary innovation concerns state intervention as a mode of counterinsurgency, for Mill sees land reform as the method both to quell Fenianism and to make Union palatable and moral in relation to the Irish people.[82] I want to suggest that "England and Ireland" also makes a significant contribution to mid-Victorian understandings of the modern state in both its colonial and domestic functions. Mill offers a theorization of the state that makes clear the intimate relationship between the justification of violence in the context of Empire and the monopoly of violence held by the state in British representational government. By analyzing the central place of Fenianism in "England and Ireland," I will demonstrate that Mill's plan of land reform has its ideological underpinnings in a commitment to Unionism and colonialism as well as an espousal of the interventionist, counterinsurgent state as the necessary foundation of representational government and its securing of both Capital and Empire. We must read "England and Ireland" not only as Mill's attempt to apply his theories of the state, Empire, and self-government to the Irish problem but as his use of the example of Ireland to rethink the theories of representational government central to his Liberal project.

At the start of the pamphlet, Mill figures the Irish question as perennial: "Once at least in every generation the question, 'What is to be done with Ireland' rises again to perplex the councils and trouble the conscience of the

78. My understanding of the role of Fenianism in forcing Mill to readdress Irish politics, specifically the question of land, is in keeping with E. D. Steele. "J. S. Mill and the Irish Question: Reform and the Integrity of Empire, 1865–1870," *Historical Journal* 13, no. 3 (Sept. 1970): 419–50.

79. Lebow, "Introduction" 12.

80. Ibid. 12 and 17. Lebow suggests that this text "may even have been ultimately responsible for Gladstone's Land Reform Acts of 1870" (17).

81. For more on the reception of Mill's pamphlet and the controversy that it created, see Kinzer 185–99.

82. Kinzer writes of "England and Ireland" that "[i]t is an essay in persuasion conceived in a Fenian-induced epiphany tying the land question to the political future of Union" (176). For more on the category of "morality" in relation to Mill's arguments in "England and Ireland," see Lynn Zastoupil, "Moral Government: J. S. Mill on Ireland," *The Historical Journal* 26, no. 3 (September 1983): 707–17; and Kinzer 183–85.

British nation" (*EI* 507). The history of Anglo–Irish relations has hitherto remained cyclical and repetitious rather than conforming to a progressive narrative of history. Mill sets up his intervention as a correction to this. He promises implicitly to offer an answer that will domesticate Ireland to a narrative of progress. And yet, the reader quickly discovers that the stasis he describes has already been ruptured by the appearance of Fenianism in Britain. Fenian acts such as the Clerkenwell bombing have shaken the belief prevalent in the 1860s that "Ireland was now not only well governed, but prosperous and improving" (*EI* 508). In other words, Fenian insurgency destroys the British complacency that allows Anglo–Irish relations to remain outside the compelling force of civilizational progress:

> It is upon a people, or at least upon upper and middle classes, basking in its fool's paradise, that *Fenianism has burst, like a clap of thunder in a clear sky, unlooked for and unintelligible,* and has found them utterly unprepared to meet it and to deal with it. The disaffection which they flattered themselves had been cured, suddenly shows itself *more intense, more violent, more unscrupulous, and more universal than ever.* The population is divided between those who wish success to Fenianism, and those who, though disapproving its means and perhaps its ends, sympathize in its embittered feelings. *Repressed by force in Ireland itself, the rebellion visits us in our own homes, scattering death among those who have given no provocation but that of being English-born. So deadly is the hatred, that it will run all risks merely to do us harm, with little or no prospect of any consequent good to itself.* (my emphases, *EI* 508)

In this important passage, Mill narrates the appearance of Fenianism in what in some ways mirrors what I will explore in the next chapter, the rhetoric of a discourse of "terrorism" that emerges during the 1860s. For now, it is important to observe several of its primary characteristics. In the passage, the natural simile of "a clap of thunder in a clear sky" suggests the juxtaposition of Fenianism with the placid background from which it emanates and represents nationalist resistance as appearing suddenly, violently, and without obvious rationale. This suddenness and unintelligibility are produced by the British public's willful ignorance; at the same time, the description of Fenianism—"more intense, more violent, more unscrupulous"—suggests its irrationality, its status as the destructive inverse of Liberal politics. If Liberalism presents itself as a politics of 'benevolence,' then a politics of "hatred"—represented as a purely destructive practice and negative affect, empty of all legitimate political aims—serves as its opposite. Fenianism is reduced to unmitigated

violence. When he writes that "the rebellion visits us in our own homes, scattering death among those who have given no provocation but that of being English-born," Mill recapitulates an idea of Fenianism popular in the British press—that Fenian violence sought primarily to murder the English innocent as a form of anticolonial protest.[83] Despite the fact that the Clerkenwell bombing was in fact a prison break and that the Manchester Van incident was also a botched attempt to rescue prisoners, Fenian acts of insurgency are narrated as the expression of a homicidal impulse and an essential criminality, acts of murder that express an apolitical and immoral desire to kill British citizens.[84]

However, the metaphor of the "clap of thunder" also naturalizes the appearance of Fenianism in a strange way, making it expected, even explicable, almost commonplace. The complex implications of this metaphor suggests Mill's "attitudinal labyrinth" concerning the movement.[85] While Mill employs the rhetoric of the anti-Fenian hysteria of the late 1860s, he also suggests that Fenianism is understandable, is part of an organic process in a sense; this aspect of the metaphor mirrors Mill's belief that Fenians were acting in good faith against a corrupt, immoral form of domination, even if their actions were reprehensible. This complex position reflects Mill's ambivalence. As Bruce Kinzer writes, he "disapproved of both the ends and means of Fenianism," yet he believed that the Fenians were to some degree correct in their assessment of Union as a relation of oppression.[86] Fenianism also provided an opportunity, however unfortunate, for reimagining Union as a productive political relation.

Mill offers his pamphlet as a corrective to the complacency and naiveté of the British public as well as to the failings of British rule that produced a manifestation of such deadly hatred. The representation of anticolonial resistance in the passage above also inaugurates Mill's move away from a direct engagement with Fenian insurgency. While Fenian violence is the occasion for Mill's intervention, a movement that will "run all risks merely to do us harm, with little or no prospect of any consequent good to itself" is in the end excluded from the domain of rational politics; in a logic that foreshadows contemporary discourses concerning terrorism, Mill will not engage with

83. See chapter 3.

84. Mill's construction of Fenianism in this passage seems to draw on a common Victorian stereotype of Irish national character—what Richard Ned Lebow calls the propensity to "sudden murder." *White Britain and Black Ireland: The Influence of Stereotypes on Colonial Policy* (Philadelphia: Institute for the Study of Human Issues, 1976), 48.

85. Kinzer 169.

86. Ibid. 169–71.

Fenianism directly on any terms. Instead, echoing Carlyle's epidemiology of Chartism, he moves toward addressing the causes of the discontent that produce Fenianism and mass support for the movement. The question of how to deal with Fenianism itself is bracketed. In the passage above, he seems to suggest that rule by force has produced the problem of an international anti-colonial movement; the IRB has moved its struggle into England proper to escape the repressive colonial apparatus in Ireland. However, this insinuation leaves unaddressed the question of whether Fenianism needs to be met with violence.[87] The problem of anti-insurgent "force" continues to operate as a repressed element in Mill's pamphlet, one that haunts much of the text and, as we will see, resurfaces when Mill returns to the problem of insurgency.

Most of "England and Ireland" instead focuses on Mill's plan of instituting land reform, the means of achieving a "revolution" in Ireland that might quell expressions of discontent such as Fenianism. Peasant proprietorship serves as the material embodiment of "the colonial fiction of the transitional stage," a phase of domination that promises to be a temporary transition to "freedom" and thus justifies what Mill calls in other writings necessary rule by "despotism." Mill chooses land as the British state's site of intervention in Ireland for several key reasons. First, social and economic relations to the land embody for Mill the fundamental difference between Irish and English national character. Again, Mill's position concerning Irishness is a complicated one. He rejects the idea that Irish disaffection is produced by "a special taint or infirmity in the Irish character" (*EI* 507), insisting instead that Liberal politics "had always attributed it to the multitude of unredressed wrongs" inherent in colonial rule in Ireland. But despite the emphasis on colonial injustice, Mill grounds his analysis of Anglo–Irish relations in an assertion of the deep difference between the English and the Irish:

> . . . there is no other civilized nation which is so far apart from Ireland in the character of its history, or so unlike it in the whole constitution of its social economy [than England]; and none, therefore, which if it applies to Ireland the modes of thinking and maxims of government which have grown up within itself, is so certain to go wrong. . . . If suitability to the opinions, feelings, and historical antecedents of those who live under them is the best recommendation of institutions, it ought to have been remembered, that the opinions, feelings and historical antecedents of the Irish people are totally

87. Mill argued against the execution of Fenians sentenced with treason-felony. Ibid. 167–68. However, he did not dispute the need for measures such as the suspension of habeas corpus, even if he saw the reason for such measures originating in British misrule (167).

> different from, and in many respects contrary to those of the English. . . . (*EI* 511)

Mill does not reject race and national character out of hand, but instead dissolves hierarchized power—ideas such as "infirmity"—in a more general idea of cultural and national difference. He suggests that while such categories must be calculated when considering Anglo–Irish relations, they do not make Ireland fundamentally ungovernable or unassimilable. Rather, this schema of raced nationality allows Mill to theorize a form of effective colonial rule for Ireland.

Mill had long advocated for the necessity of adapting the forms and policies of colonial government to the particular culture of those colonized. He cites India as an example of the success of such a colonialist strategy: "India is now governed, if with a large share of the ordinary imperfections of rulers, yet with a full perception and recognition of its differences from England. What has been done for India has now to be done for Ireland; and as we should have deserved to be turned out of one, had we not proved equal to the need, so shall we lose the other" (*EI* 519).[88] Mill's vision of the cultural specificity of colonial power must be applied in Ireland in order to make continued English rule, in other words Union, tenable. Land is not only a persistent site of injustice, but land relations somehow express an essential cultural and racial difference between the Irish and English, a difference that has not been successfully calculated in the structures of colonial rule.

Land and the history of agricultural economic relations between England and Ireland provide a way to understand, according to Mill, that a concept of absolute property, while organic to England, did not exist historically in Ireland. Rather, he identifies the Irish relation to the land as communal: "The land virtually belonged to the entire sept; the chief was little more than the managing member of the association" (*EI* 436). This originary Irish agricultural economy was supplanted by a feudal system that eventually took the form of a parasitic absentee landlord system. However, what remained "in the moral feelings of the Irish people" was the idea that "the right to hold the land goes, as it did in the beginning, with the right to till it" (*EI* 513). Mill chooses land as his site of intervention because it makes apparent alternative,

88. Mill also notes "the many points of resemblance between the Irish and the Hindoo character" as well as "between the agricultural economy of Ireland and that of India" (EI 519). I disagree with Jennifer Pitts's assessment that Mill affords the Irish peasantry a rationality that he does not in the case of the Indian subaltern class. Pitts 146–50. I would argue instead that Mill's emphasis is on continuity and similarity in the cases of Ireland and India.

culturally specific notions of property, value, and social relations that have not been assimilated and harnessed by Empire.

Mill identifies the Irish notion of property as a persistent vestige of precapitalist relations. This idea of property resists the mediation of value through the figure of the landlord (who functions as "a mere burden on the land") as well as the alienation of labor produced by lacking a stable claim to the land that one tills. The Irish alternative notion of land insists on use value rather than exchange value as the primary mode through which property is understood. This Irish concept of property remains recalcitrant to and disrupts the capitalization and expropriation inherent in Union, specifically the agricultural economy imposed upon Ireland.

Mill identifies the coexistence of the persistent Irish idea of property with the transformation of the Irish economy under British domination in a way that resonates with Dipesh Chakrabarty's theorization of the two histories of Capital found in Marx's thought. It is notable that Marx was a contemporary of Mill's, and, as I have shown in chapter 1, Marx argued in the 1860s that Ireland was the key to understanding and overthrowing the capitalist mode of production in Britain. Reading Marx's theorization of the abstraction of labor, Chakrabarty defines History 1 as "the backbone of the usual narratives of transition to the capitalist mode of production," "a past posited by capital itself as its precondition."[89] History 2 exists as antecedents to Capital that "do not lend themselves to the reproduction of the logic of capital," "pasts [not] separate from capital; they inhere in capital and yet interrupt and punctuate the run of capital's own logic" (63). Notably, Chakrabarty suggests that this space of uncertainty within capital indicates "a site of 'survival' of that which seems pre- or noncapitalist [which] could very well be the site of an ongoing battle" (65). Reading Mill against the grain and in relation to Marx and Chakrabarty, the Irish conception of property, part of a larger set of pre- or noncapitalist economic relations, stands as an example of History 2. It inheres as part of the exploitative agricultural economy of absenteeism and tenant farming central to the expansion of the capitalist mode of production in the United Kingdom. Mill fixates on this residue of an alternative idea of property because it surfaces repeatedly as the source of agricultural and anticolonial insurgency and transforms the agricultural mode of production into a zone of struggle between History 1 and History 2. For Mill, it is from this space that all Irish insurrection emerges.

89. "The Two Histories of Capital," in *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference,* 2nd ed. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), 47–71.

Mill's political project, then, is to imagine a way to recuperate this resistant set of relations and ideas and to press them into the service of Capital, Union, and Empire. He writes: "Even the Whiteboy and the Rockite, in their outrages against the landlord *fought for, not against, the sacredness of what was property in their eyes;* for it is not the right of the rent-receiver, but the right of the cultivator, with which the idea of property is connected in the Irish popular mind" (my emphasis, *EI* 513). Such an analysis of agrarian insurgency takes threatening difference—property identified with the "right of the cultivator" as opposed to that of "the rent-receiver"—and works to find sameness. However alien and disruptive the alternative idea of property is to British rule in Ireland, Mill reduces it to a common denominator: "the sacredness of what was property in their eyes." Therefore, Mill's proposed plan of land reform clearly aims at a kind of capitalist assimilation. The "revolution" of land reform that he maps out identifies anticapitalist vestiges, strips them of their revolutionary and insurgent power, and makes them central to a project of reform and economic restructuring. That which is a source of resistance and insurgency becomes assimilated as part of the means by which colonial domination can be maintained more effectively. The aims of this project are to secure expropriation, to end disruptions to Capital, and to produce Irish consent to Union. Mill is absolutely unambiguous that these are his goals. He identifies Ireland as unfit for self-government and as destined for continued Union with Britain, rehearsing a series of familiar Unionist rationales for the impossibility of an independent Ireland.[90] He even anticipates nationalist arguments against Union in his essay. Land reform becomes a means to address "the real cause" of "Irish disaffection" (*EI* 532) and at the same time to capitalize the Irish agricultural economy and to render Union viable.

The state will oversee and administer this massive transformation in Ireland; it is the means and the agent of this project. Implicit in Mill's plan, therefore, is the need to expand and to strengthen the apparatuses of the colonial state in Ireland. In effect, Mill is as interested in reimagining the form of the state in the United Kingdom as he is in espousing a program of peasant proprietorship as a method of counterinsurgency. He asserts: "The time is passed for a mere amicable mediation of the State between the landlord and the tenant. There must be compulsory powers, and a strict judicial inquiry" (*EI* 527). He argues for the importance of the "guarantee of law" (*EI* 527), a phrase that read "the guarantee of the State" in earlier drafts of the article (*EI*

90. Mill states that "Ireland is marked out for union with England" (*EI* 525) and provides a variety of reasons why throughout the pamphlet.

527). For Mill, "the State" secures both expropriation and order in Ireland; it must stand as the compulsory force that regulates economic and social relations and thereby produces peaceful and productive relations between peasant and landlord and by extension Ireland and England. Building on Heather Laird's groundbreaking work in *Subversive Law in Ireland,* I would also argue that Mill's emphasis on the "guarantee of law" suggests the ways in which his plan for state-sponsored land reform subverts "opposing concepts of law" (21) that existed in Irish society.

Mill's pamphlet offers us a powerful example of the ways in which the modern state can be described as derivative and reactive. As Mill makes clear, the state responds to alternative forms of property, labor, and law as well as popular insurrection. It mimics and thereby becomes defined by them. Mill's vision requires that state formation in the United Kingdom take place in relation to both Irish anticolonial insurgency and pre- or anticapitalist formations in Ireland, which he sees as inseparable phenomena. My reading of a foundational Liberal political theorist such as Mill offers historical force to recent theoretical insights concerning the modern expansion of Empire and Capital, in particular their embodiment in the form of the nation-state. For example, Hardt and Negri argue that institutions of Capital and Empire, the nation-state being a primary example, form in response to proletarian internationalism and other vital forms of radical politics.[91] Similarly, David Lloyd demonstrates the way that the colonial state has developed in an intimate reciprocity with various forms of insurrection that it seems to reject as its antithesis and other.[92]

This transformation of the state, wrought by the state, takes the form of a scene of seduction that seeks to transform the affect of insurrection, its "alienation of feeling" (*EI* 526). Throughout "England and Ireland," Mill defines anticolonial protest and struggle as a politics of "hatred," "indignation" (*EI* 509), outrage, or anger, emotions that stand as the antithesis of rational politics. He then imagines that the state, through the imposition of a "safe" revolution that seems to calculate Irish difference and to offer justice in those terms, might transform the feelings of the Irish people and, by exten-

91. "These international cycles of struggles were the real motor that drove the development of the institutions of capital and that drove it in a process of reforming and restructuring. Proletarian, anticolonial and anti-imperialist internationalism, the struggle for communism, which lived in all the most powerful insurrectional events of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, anticipated and prefigured the processes of globalization of capital and formation of Empire. In this way the formation of Empire is a *response* to proletarian internationalism." *Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), 51.

92. See "Nationalism Against the State," in *Ireland after History.*

sion, their anticolonialism. He argues, "If ever, in our time, Ireland is to be a consenting party to her union with England, the changes must be so made that the existing generation of Irish farmers shall at once enter upon their benefits." Land reform can mobilize public "opinion" and "desire" and might produce "consent" and "obedience"—those categories that Mill identifies as crucial to the preparation of subjects for modern citizenship and representative government. Mill's "colonial fiction of the transitional stage" for Ireland serves as a mode of cultural, political, and economic assimilation and will produce the conversion of feelings that Mill believes is necessary to secure Union. While Mill identifies representational government with rationality and a benevolence that eschews affect, the state is forced to engage with affect in order to quell politics and protest outside its rationality. This imperative echoes Arnold's in *Culture and Anarchy* and *Celtic Literature*—to inspire love and attachment in the Irish through the presentation of a benevolent English presence. Mill sets this method of rule against what he calls in his earlier writing on Ireland "simple, straightforward military despotism," "the vulgarest and least recondite of political conception" (*EI 499*). In other words, the state must operate through new forms of hegemony and subjectivization in order to secure its power over Ireland. Mill's vision of the state in Ireland has its counterpart in contemporaneous redefinitions of the state and citizenship that occurred after the Reform movement secured the suffrage of proletarian men. As I have suggested, the British state was similarly interested in producing obedience and new forms of affect in the protesting working classes who were now made citizens.

Mill's model of a kind of state seduction seems to reject the use of force in maintaining government over Ireland:

> Let our statesmen be assured that now, when the long deferred day of Fenianism has come, nothing which is not accepted by the Irish tenantry as a permanent solution of the land difficulty, will prevent Fenianism, or something equivalent to it, from being the standing torment of the English Government and people. If without removing this difficulty, we attempt to hold Ireland by force, it will be at the expense of all the character we possess as lovers and maintenance of free government, or respecters of any rights except our own. (*EI* 532)

He begins by asserting "that to hold Ireland permanently *by the old bad means* is simply impossible" (my emphasis, *EI* 520). Mill identifies "the old bad means" specifically as violent domination of the colonial state—"the holding

down by military violence of a people in desperation, constantly struggling to break their fetters" (*EI* 520). However, we must be mindful that the state's role in the process of colonial seduction, in the "fiction of the transitional stage," takes the form of "compulsory powers." In addition, Mill does not reject the use of force on moral or ethical grounds; rather he expresses anxiety about the ramifications for national and international public opinion. Force is exerted at the expense of a particular vision of Englishness as a benevolent force of democracy both at home and abroad: " . . . it will dangerously aggravate all our chances of misunderstandings with any of the great powers of the world, culminating in war; we shall be in a state of open revolt against the universal conscience of Europe and Christendom, and more and more against our own" (*EI* 451). Mill had already attempted to refashion the image of England's interventionism and use of international force in his 1859 essay, "A Few Words on Non-Intervention." In this article, he rejects the idea that Britain acts in self-interest, and recasts British intervention as a form of benevolence, an agent in the spread of liberty, and a means of assuring self-protection and security. He consequently justifies Britain's use of force in a variety of international contexts by redefining and renarrating it.

Similarly, in "England and Ireland," he recasts the use of force, now focusing on Anglo–Irish relations. As I've shown, he rejects the "old bad means" for strategic reasons. Mill is acutely aware of European and American public opinion about the violent rule of Ireland by England, contending that "[n]either Europe nor America would now bear the sight of a Poland across the Irish Channel" (*EI* 520). He then relies on another comparison to assert the vulnerability of England to international conflict and pressure. The violent suppression of a people who is striving for independence is "a spectacle which Russia is still able to give to mankind, because Russia is almost inaccessible to a foreign enemy; but the attempt could not long succeed with a country so vulnerable as England, having territories to defend in every part of the globe, and half her population dependent on foreign commerce" (*EI* 520). International reaction to injustice in Ireland matters because of Britain's assailable geographical position, the potential economic impact of sanctions on Britain, and the difficulty of protecting a diffuse global empire.

It is not only international outrage that concerns Mill, but the self-perception of the British public. He writes:

> Neither do I believe that the mass of the British people, those who are not yet corrupted by power, would permit the attempt. The prophets who, judging, I presume, from themselves, always augur the worst of the moral sentiments of

> their countrymen, are already asseverating that, whether right or wrong, the British people would rather devastate Ireland from end to end and root out its inhabitants, than consent its separation from England. If we believe them, the people of England are a kind of bloodhounds, always ready to break loose and perpetrate Jamaica horrors, unless they, and their like, are there to temper and restrain British brutality. This representation does not accord with my experience. (*EI* 520)

In this passage, Mill makes apparent the intimate connection between Britain's colonial policies and ideas of Britishness. The relationship between colonialism and national identity is dialectic; the forms of colonialism simultaneously reflect, are shaped by, and produce the "moral sentiments" of the British people. The mythos of representational politics is at work here. The colonial state must represent the people, but at the same time, the nation's sense of itself is produced by the actions of that state. Mill invokes the example of the Morant Bay rebellion and the Governor Eyre controversy in which British public opinion about the violence of colonial domination and the question of the legality of martial law coincided with a process of national and nationalist self-fashioning. He seems to reject martial law primarily because of the threat that it poses to the idea of a benevolent and just Britishness and the way that the use of force unmasks the fiction of progress and reveals its foundation in brutal violence.

Mill also expresses a concern that persists through the nineteenth century in Britain—the anxiety that progressive class politics and proletarian radicalism undercut the moral force of British nationalist and imperialist ideologies. In particular, he questions the willingness of the English working classes to support or participate in state violence in an age of internationalist radicalism:

> An age when delegates of working men meet in European Congresses to concert united action for the interests of labour, is not one in which labourers will cut down labourers at other people's bidding. The time is come when the democracy of one country will join hands with the democracy of another, rather than back their own ruling authorities in putting it down. (*EI* 521)

He recognizes a developing internationalism in which class interests cross national boundaries and threaten to supersede nationalist identification and allegiance. The distinction in the first sentence between "labourers" and "other people" marks a potential alienation of those working-class subjects newly incorporated into citizenry from the nation-state to which they are subject.

Proletarian radicalism exists in tension with and as a potential challenge to the Britishness that Mill strenuously asserts throughout the essay.

Mill overcomes this problem through a rejection of force that is purely strategic and eventually reveals itself as a ruse. As soon as he denies the efficacy and morality of securing rule through violence, he qualifies himself:

> I shall not believe, until I see it proved, that the English and Scotch people are capable of the folly and wickedness of carrying fire and sword over Ireland in order that their rulers may govern Ireland contrary to the will of the Irish people. *That they would put down a partial outbreak, in order to get a fair trial, for a system of government beneficent and generally acceptable to the people, I readily believe; nor should I in any way blame them for doing so.* (my emphasis, *EI* 521)

This remarkable passage brings me to the crux of my argument about Mill's essay. In a gesture of reconciliation that works against working-class internationalism, Mill invokes the idea of "the people," the unity of British citizens. He declares the "English and Scotch people incapable" of coercive rule of Ireland because to do so would violate the fictive principles of democracy by conflicting with "the will of the Irish people." Mill's agenda is to find a Unionist politics that will incite multiple consents by claiming to represent the wills of the various peoples of the United Kingdom. In other words, like Arnold, Mill makes clear that the newly reconfigured United Kingdom requires a hegemonic, ethical state, one that produces docile citizens who acquiesce to political representation across the boundaries that persist within the U.K. The denunciation of "fire and sword"—the image of the state as NOT repressive, coercive, and violent—serves to produce cohesion and consent over and above class distinctions.

However, Mill immediately qualifies this by insisting on a necessary exception. Mill's rejection of violent domination is in fact a re-presentation of that state violence in a form that might produce popular consent despite radical internationalist politics. While "the fire and sword" will not find mass support in Britain: "That they would put down a partial outbreak, in order to get a fair trial for a system of government beneficent and generally acceptable to the people, I readily believe; nor should I in any way blame them for doing so." The third-person-plural subject of the sentence refers directly to "the English and Scotch people" who become the agents of the suppression of insurgency. The will of the British people (reduced to England and Scotland) suddenly finds expression and representation not in a rejection of force but in an alternative formulation of violent repression. "The people" are no

longer alienated by state violence but become the locus of it. That violence is recast as a temporary measure, solely reactive, regrettable though necessary, and as that which creates the condition of possibility for a "beneficent" form of colonial governance. The state's martial law is renarrated as self-preservation and self-protection, occluding the way that exceptional circumstances in fact become the rule of state power. Here is the despotism that justifies itself as indispensable to the forward march of colonialist progress. The state must engage in a process of seduction—in other words, must establish hegemony—while also maintaining its right to engage in violence in the name of counterinsurgency.

Hence, if alternative notions of property and economy are recuperable for Empire and Capital, then Fenianism and other forms of anticolonial insurgency are not. Until state-sponsored land reform renders Fenianism obsolete, Mill's state must reserve the right to engage in violent counterinsurgency as a condition of possibility for progress in Ireland. In doing so, the state claims to represent the will and interest of its "people." Counterinsurgency is the condition of possibility for the ethical state that might establish hegemonic rule in all regions of the United Kingdom. As the logic of Mill's sentence reveals, "the people" must be invoked and recruited as agents in this project, a move that renarrates state violence as circumscribed (signaled by the adjective "partial") and instrumental.

Indeed, the history of state formation in mid-nineteenth-century Ireland would bear out the logic in this passage. While the state expanded to oversee and manage "benevolent" projects such as land reform, education, and the development of infrastructure such as railway service, Ireland became the most important colonial laboratory for the state's technologies of counterinsurgency. For example, the first national police force established in the United Kingdom or the British Empire was founded in Ireland. The state in Ireland would mimic the decentered tactics of Fenianism, developing new tactics of counterinsurgency that relied on surveillance, informers, and developing technologies of identification and documentation such as photography. The state was transformed by insurgency while claiming to expel it, and these new forms of violence and repression were most often represented in Mill's terms—as regrettable consequences of a state of emergency, as an exception to a state apparatus described repeatedly as nonviolent and noncoercive, even harmonizing.

As I've shown, Fenianism formed a constitutive element in theories of the Liberal state in mid-Victorian Britain. Not only was the state imagined as essentially counterinsurgent, but its forms and institutions were imagined

as reactive to and shaped by forms of Irish insurrection; one could say that the modern hegemonic state in Britain is constituted through its counterinsurgency. As we will see, what secures and rationalizes this vision of the state is the emergence of the modern idea of "terrorism" through which the state legitimated itself. If a surprising uniformity reveals itself in the thoughts of Arnold and Mill, patterns of ambivalence and vigorous ideological contestation in public discourse about Fenianism are most apparent. In the next chapter, I will show that, at the center of this ideological transformation and struggle for hegemony stands the legitimation of state violence through the construction of its object as "terrorist."

CHAPTER 3

ENVISIONING TERROR

Anticolonial Nationalism and the Modern Discourse of Terrorism in the Mid-Victorian Popular Culture

IN 1881, over a decade after "Rebellion Had Bad Luck" appeared in the pages of *Punch,* another cartoon titled "Strangling the Monster" appeared in the same magazine. In the cartoon, Prime Minister Gladstone battles a three-headed, hydralike monster that represents Ireland's Land League. The image deploys the myth of Hercules and the hydra and thereby inserts the Land League, and by extension Fenianism, into a long tradition of using such classical iconography to symbolize the violent interface between state power and various forms of antistate resistance, in particular to Empire and Capital.[1] Drawing on the invocation of this myth throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries by thinkers such as Sir Walter Raleigh, Francis Bacon, and Thomas Hobbes, the artist John Tenniel associates Gladstone with a potent set of political ideas embodied in the figure of Hercules—a centralized state claimed as the agent of progress,[2] the sanctioned violence of that state in forms such as capital punishment and even genocide,[3] as well as the challenges of "imposing order on the increasingly global systems of labor."[4]

1. For a succinct history of the symbolic uses of the Hercules and hydra myth from the early modern period through the eighteenth century, see Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners, and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic* (Boston: Beacon, 2000), 2–4.
2. Ibid. 2.
3. Ibid. 30, 40, and 49.
4. Ibid. 2.

STRANGLING THE MONSTER.

FIGURE 3–1. "Strangling the Monster," 1881

The many-headed hydra casts the Land League and Fenianism not only as a menacing global phenomenon (which, as we will see, they were) but as a monstrous manifestation of the anarchy of the people, the antithesis of progress, requiring violent containment. If the Herculean Gladstone represents for the British public "a unifier of the centralized territorial state, and . . . vast imperial ambition,"[5] he stands in an intimate, even constitutive relation to the hydralike figure of Irish insurgency. Thus, Tenniel's cartoon stands as an example of how the logic at work in Mill's and Arnold's theories of the state was also widely disseminated through nineteenth-century British popular culture. In this encounter with resistance to British power, imperial-capitalist benevolence and progress reveal their foundation in a monopoly of violence. He attempts to strangle the monster but also to push him back over a precipice, the cliff serving as an echo of the Roman Tarpeian rock invoked by Arnold in *Culture and Anarchy*.

Clearly the Land League's monstrosity invites the viewer of the image to identify with Gladstone's efficacious counterinsurgent violence and simultaneously to disidentify with anticolonial violence. While the representation of the prime minister as Hercules casts this violence as necessary to imperial and capitalist progress, Gladstone's garb and weapon—animal skin cape and club—also associate the destruction of the monster with the primitive and atavistic rather than simply the classical, a strange move, it would seem, for a text that clearly supports counterinsurgency. However, as in the writings of Arnold and Mill, "Strangling the Monster" suggests that Gladstone has been driven to move past the "remedial measures" of disciplinary violence (represented by the discarded club) to more extreme measures, in particular capital punishment. Gladstone's attire, easily misread as Neanderthal as well as Greek or Roman, recasts the state's counterinsurgent violence as a mirror of the "primitive" violence of anticolonial insurgency, entirely reactionary measures to which Gladstone is reduced by the Land League rather than the origins of state power itself. Figuring Gladstone as simultaneously mythic and primitive emphasizes his brute strength, but more importantly implies that the 'civilized' and 'rational' state only asserts barbaric, premodern violence when forced to by its foes, an argument that, as we have seen in the previous chapter, is a fundamental feature of theorizations of the modern hegemonic state in mid-Victorian Britain. There is an obvious mythicization of that aspect of state violence. Through the Hercules–hydra myth, the encounter between Gladstone and Irish resistance is also placed into a historical contin-

5. Ibid.

uum of violence and terror used against those who have resisted the forward march of progress.[6]

However, if we look closely, this image threatens the security of the myth that it restages and seeks to guarantee. For in fact, Gladstone's act of strangulation is a potential failure. One of the Land League's heads eludes his grasp, the head named "Terrorism," perhaps signifying the one immortal head of the hydra in the Hercules myth, a seemingly insurmountable obstacle for Hercules, one that required a divine instrument, Athena's golden sword, to be vanquished. In this cartoon, the sword is nowhere to be found, as Gladstone faces the monster with his bare hands and fails to contain "terrorism." Thus, this image raises crucial questions concerning the representation of anticolonial struggle and state violence in the second half of the nineteenth century. How has agrarian, anticolonial resistance come to be described by the term "terrorism" in its modern sense? Why is it "terrorism" in particular rather than "anarchy" or "sedition" that threatens to elude the grasp of state power embodied by Gladstone? By looking backward at the representation of Fenianism in the British press in the 1860s and 1870s, we can see clearly the emergence of a new object of state biopolitical power—the "terrorist" and his[7] practices called "terrorism." This new discourse that emerges in writings about Fenianism becomes malleable over the course of several decades so that the descriptive "terrorism" is used to describe a variety of Irish insurgent movements, including the Land League.

To understand what makes an image such as "Strangling the Monster" possible, I want to return to the image "Rebellion Had Bad Luck" (Fig. 2–1), which appeared sixteen years earlier. It tells us much more about representations of Fenianism in mid-Victorian Britain than we have explored thus far. The gesture of public reassurance expressed both in the caption and in the easy disciplining of the Fenian belies, perhaps represses, the tremendous panic that had begun to develop about the "terror" of Fenianism in Britain. The cartoon also engages in an obvious racialization of the Fenian and his politics, which serves both to intensify and to disperse such panic. In a familiar operation, the Fenian's identity constructs Britishness through its inversion. Yet as we will see, this vision of British national identity had much more at stake than it did in the 1840s, for a whole new category, the modern Brit-

6. Notably, when Linebaugh and Rediker call attention to this history, they emphasize that capital punishment stood at the center of what Bacon would call a "holy war" against the people and their disorder and resistance (ibid. 49–70).

7. I use the masculine pronoun because, as I will reveal in this chapter, the figure of the terrorist is gendered male consistently.

ish 'citizen,' was coming into being. I have already demonstrated that Arnold and Mill theorized the British hegemonic state as fundamentally counterinsurgent, Fenianism serving as that against which it defined itself. But this cartoon's representation of the Fenian participates in a reimagining of British national identity through a new definition of citizenship in this period. Catherine Hall, Keith McClelland, and Jane Rendall have argued that during the period immediately preceding and during the Reform Acts of 1867–68, the language and meaning of 'citizenship' reached an important turning point. With the extension of suffrage to much of the male British working class, the boundary between 'subjects' and 'citizens' shifted.[8] One corollary of these legal and political changes was debate about the meaning of citizenship and nationality, in particular whether the rights of citizens were "the source of identity, belonging and meaning," in other words, "formative of character."[9] Or was citizenship simply an instrumental mechanism to secure individual rights? In the period of Reform agitation and legislation, these debates centered on the critical relationship between citizenship and self-improvement. How might the extension of citizenship both produce and regulate subjects who were "worthy" of the rights conferred upon them? How might formerly unruly members of the proletariat be transformed into obedient citizens? In their study *Culture and the State,* David Lloyd and Paul Thomas describe this as a process by which "docility or respectability replaces ownership as the condition for an extension of the franchise."[10] Therefore, the condition of possibility for citizenship came to be determined by one's assent to the state's authority and obedience before the law. The newly enfranchised subject must disavow all forms of anarchy, as resistance and radicalism were described by Arnold, or his rights of citizenship would be revoked.

This new hegemonic understanding of citizenship develops at the precise moment when the idea of "terrorism" in its modern incarnation appears, and this convergence, I suggest, is not coincidental. In my analysis, the caricatured male Fenian and the hydra-headed monster of Irish resistance serve as counterpoints through which the respectable man is interpellated as a docile subject of the counterinsurgent state. In this chapter, I will show how visual

8. In *Defining the Victorian Nation*: *Class, Race, Gender, and the Reform Act of 1867* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), Hall, McClelland, and Rendall write of "the critical distinction between the subject and the citizen" in nineteenth-century Britain and its Empire. "All living within the rule of a given state (which might include its own territory and also those conquered or subordinated areas subject to it) are subject to the laws, rule and force of the state, but only some are citizens in the sense of those who are thought to have rights within and relation to the state" (60).

9. Ibid. 58.

10. Lloyd and Thomas, *Culture and the State* (New York: Routledge, 1998), 136.

images and journalistic writing in the Victorian press narrate Fenian politics as "terrorism," a category that stands as the inversion and negation of British national identity and its new counterpart, obedient citizenship. The popular discourse of "terrorism" consolidates the state as envisioned by Arnold and Mill and also marshals newly formed citizens into its service.

Look at "Rebellion Had Bad Luck" again. The Fenian is dressed in a caricature of 'typical' Irish clothing, and the costume renders him foreign, ridiculous, and boyish, as the short pants in particular indicate. The figure contrasts with the serious, purposeful John Bull, an agent of mature masculinity. The Fenian is racialized through the simianization of his physiognomy.[11] Through the Fenian's body, the cartoon represents anticolonial politics as an expression of racial inferiority, atavism, and cultural backwardness. The relation between John Bull and the unnamed Fenian takes a form that, in its disciplinary nature, might be parental or pedagogic. By suggesting the possibility of both these relations, the cartoon draws on colonial discourse that figures imperial rule as the "parenting" of childlike subject peoples deemed incapable of self-government; at the same time, the childishness of the insurgent locates him as temporally anterior to British civilization, a vestige of the premodern past that appears in the British present.[12]

In this cartoon, we see a phenomenon that is familiar at this point. British national identity is defined through its colonialist relationship to 'Irishness,' in particular the cultural and racial identity to which Irish nationalism was imagined to give expression. However, in the 1860s, this particular version of Irish identity comes to be called "terrorism," a term that exists within a complex matrix of mutually constitutive ideas about Fenianism, British national identity, citizenship, and the state. Victorian cartoon art and journalism stage the threat of Fenianism as an occasion to imagine the relationship between the British and Irish nation, the state, and the obedient citizen's relation to the state that claims to protect him or her. I will show how these texts work to recruit their readers and viewers as obedient subjects before the law who, through their relationship to Fenianism, consent to imagine themselves as willing citizen participants of the hegemonic British nation-state. By reading the recurrent figure of the Fenian, we can also trace the contours of a public field of contestation concerning the constitution of the citizen, the right to

11. L. Perry Curtis has studied in depth this simianization of the Irish and the racial science from which it emerged in *Apes and Angels: The Irishman in Victorian Caricature,* rev. ed. (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institute Press, 1997).

12. My reading here is informed by Johannes Fabian's work on the denial of coevalness. *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983).

violent protest and national self-determination, the question of what constitutes legitimate political activity, and the authorization of counterinsurgent violence as a fundamental feature of the state. The crisis of hegemony in Britain around these issues, with all its oscillations, contestations, and unstable, shifting ideological formations, centers on the question of Fenianism.

These representations in the Victorian press emerged as Fenian tactics of resistance shifted in the mid-1860s. The IRB began to engage in raids, rescues, and other guerilla military actions designed to demonstrate their resources and power to the British government. These were new forms of anticolonial insurgency, both unconventional and daring in their tactics.[13] The year 1867 saw three events that would serve as significant turning points in the British public's awareness about the presence of Fenians in Britain proper: the attempted Chester castle raid, the Manchester van rescue, and the Clerkenwell Prison explosion. The last two incidents were attempts to rescue Fenian prisoners from British custody, and served as an extension of the Fenian demand that members of the IRB be granted the status of political prisoners rather than common criminals. In addition, these actions occurred following the proclamation of martial law in Ireland in response to Fenian agitation, forbidding even any form of peaceful demonstration or agitation in Ireland. Both the Clerkenwell bombing and the Manchester van rescue were designed, according to Fenian writers and historians, to make a statement by rescuing prisoners. In both cases, innocent civilians were killed in the process. As we will see, politicians and journalists claimed that these deaths were part of the design of Fenians who sought to kill on the basis of national identity and to undermine the British constitution through violent anarchy that threatened the safety of the general public. The contestation over the narration of these events is an important part of the context out of which these journalistic representations of Fenianism emerge.

It is during this year 1867 that the modern idea of "terrorism" appears in Britain to describe Fenianism. The description in its modern incarnation arises to narrate new forms of insurgency but also to make claims concerning the causes and aims of this insurgency. The word "terrorism" was a neologism of the late eighteenth century that emerged in reactionary accounts and histories of the French Revolution of 1789–94. In these accounts, Jacobin power was called "the Reign of Terror," the Jacobins "terrorists," and their system of government "terrorism."[14] However, during 1867, the historically specific

13. Patrick Quinlivan and Paul Rose, *The Fenians in England, 1865–1872* (London: John Calder, 1982), 21.

14. The *Oxford English Dictionary* documents the emergence of these terms in histories of the French Revolution written as early as 1791.

word "terrorism" was abstracted and became a comparative term that might indicate any systematic political method that had as its primary method the intimidation, terrorization, and destruction of those against whom it was directed. In this shift of usage and definition, "terrorism" moves from a mode of government to a political policy or methodology, marking a shift from a descriptive of an institutionalized mode of governance to a method of terrorization that is not necessarily centralized or institutionalized.[15] The logic of counterrevolutionary historiography, which argued that the Jacobin government devolved into a reign of terror for terror's sake, reaches fruition. What distinguished a general idea of "terrorism" was its definition by its means alone, which is reduced to the provocation of terror, eliding its political ends.[16]

While the dehistoricized usage of the term "terrorism" occasionally referred to several geographically disparate revolutionary and anarchist organizations, including those in Russia, the *Oxford English Dictionary* documents that the very first of such uses occurred in writing describing Irish anticolonial insurgency. For example, in his *Irish History* (1861), Goldwin Smith described Irish insurgency as a "moral epidemic" that was "[l]ike the terrorism of the Jacobins." The explicit comparison of the simile quickly transformed to the straightforward use of the term as a mode of identification; the logic of comparison disappears completely, and Irish insurgency is "terrorism" proper. Hence, the very first example of the use of the word "terrorist" outside of its historically bound context of revolutionary France was in 1866 in an account of "the daughter of a Wexford terrorist, [who] directed many of the tortures which were so extensively practiced."[17] The *OED* documents the shift of usage as coinciding with the emergence of Fenianism. Suddenly terrorism was redefined as a strategy of terrorization not BY and THROUGH the state and its apparatuses but AGAINST the state and its citizens. As we will see, it is after the Clerkenwell bombing in 1867 that the terms "terror," "terrorism," and "terrorist" became common descriptors to express a popular understanding of Fenianism.

Cartoon art was one of the most important genres to disseminate ideas of Irish "terrorism." Cartoons such as "Rebellion Had Bad Luck" began to appear frequently in *Punch* magazine and other comic weeklies during the mid-1860s. While these representations find their antecedents in 1840s depictions

15. See the *Oxford English Dictionary* entries for the words "terrorism" and "terrorist."

16. The general definition of "terrorism" in the *OED,* differentiated from its historically bound usage, follows this logic: "a policy intended to strike with terror those against whom it is adopted; the employment of methods of intimidation; the fact of terrorizing or condition of being terrorized." The aim of "terrorism" is solely to provoke a state identified as terror in its objects.

17. See the *OED* entry for "terrorist."

of Irish immigrants, Young Ireland, and O'Connell's Repeal movement,[18] they are distinguished by their persistent preoccupation with the interface between Fenianism and the British state. They express in particular a fixation with the Irish Fenian as an embodiment of premodern, racially determined violence as well as with the legitimation of the state's extreme counterinsurgent violence. Appearing during the transformation of the nation-state engendered by Reform, such cartoons also serve to establish, through a complex matrix of identifications, the boundaries of citizenship, national identity, criminality, and legitimate politics for the viewing citizen-subject. Close readings of this widely disseminated comic art and its politics of spectatorship allow us a point of entry through which to begin an examination of the most striking elements of an emerging ideology of counterinsurgency regarding Fenianism.

Art historian Finten Cullen has cautioned against overestimating the importance of these cartoons; he argues that the Irishman in these images is "but *one of the variety* of visual references we have of British attitudes to the Irish in Britain or the Irish in general."[19] Keeping in mind Cullen's warning, I have chosen to focus on these images, not as the only or most important representation of Irishness in general during the period, but as a significant part of newspaper discourse on Irish "terrorism" during the period. By selecting this archive, I do not want to suggest that other visual and textual representations of Ireland and of Fenianism did not exist, but that newspaper discourse played a particularly formative role in the emergence of this ideology of counterinsurgency. Here I am building on Benedict Anderson's analysis of the importance of print-capitalism to the development and dissemination of European statist nationalisms[20] and Louis Althusser's description of the mass media as an ideological state apparatus;[21] both theorists insist on the newspaper press as a constitutive element in the formations and dissemination of ideologies such as statist nationalisms. Historian Michael De Nie has extend-

18. See Richard Ned Lebow, *White Britain and Black Ireland: The Influence of Stereotypes on Colonial Policy* (Philadelphia: Institute for the Study of Human Issues, 1976), and Michael De Nie, *The Eternal Paddy: Irish Identity and the British Press, 1798–1882* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2004).

19. Cullen goes on to suggest that "Curtis's highly influential books . . . have coloured our view of the representation of the Irish to such an extent that we are left with a highly negative image." *Visual Politics: The Representation of Ireland, 1750–1930* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1997), 81.

20. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism,* rev. ed. (London: Verso, 1983), 24–36.

21. "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes towards an Investigation)," in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays,* trans. Ben Brewster (New York: Monthly Review, 1971), 143. It is striking that Althusser calls attention to the special function of the press in educating citizens and disseminating nationalist ideology (154).

ed such work to argue that newspaper culture played a particularly prominent role in the formation of British public opinion about Ireland. He asserts that "Victorian Britons, especially after mid-century, took it for granted that their newspaper press was an active social and political agent that informed and expressed the public mind," in particular that of the middle classes;[22] through a triangulation between the press, its readers, and politicians, both ideology and policy concerning Ireland emerged.[23] I would add that newspaper discourse had a direct impact on the administrative structures and policies of the colonial state. One has only to look through the numerous volumes of papers assembled by Thomas Larcom, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland during the 1860s and 1870s, to see a material example of this intimate relationship between the press and counterinsurgency. At Larcom's request, Dublin Castle assembled over a hundred scrapbooks filled with newspaper clippings and cartoons of Fenianism as well as articles from the Irish nationalist press as a resource for their police force and military's counterinsurgency tactics.[24]

Much critical analysis of these cartoons has focused on the racialization and simianization of the Irish, particularly of Irish insurgents. L. Perry Curtis's groundbreaking study, *Apes and Angels: The Irishman in Victorian Caricature,* serves as a centerpiece in debates about these images. Curtis argues that these Victorian cartoons must be read as part of a British ideology that constructed the Irish as a racial other, particularly through the use of physiognomic difference and simianization. Curtis's work has been taken to task by revisionists on several counts. Some historians such as Sheridan Gilley have engaged in solipsistic debates about whether Victorian prejudice against the Irish can be called "racism" since the Irish are "white"—an argument that reveals more about Gilley's adamant epidermal racism than it does about the historical material that he examines.[25] In addition, Gilley argues that the presence of Celtophilia and Hibernaphilia in Victorian Britain serves as a corrective to a vision of persistent anti-Irish racism in Britain.[26] However, as my reading of Arnold has made clear, discourses such as Celticism, while containing certain stereotypes that Gilley reads as benevolent or "positive," were still intimately linked to that racism and to colonialist and Unionist politics.

22. De Nie 29.

23. Ibid. 33.

24. NLI, Larcom Papers, Mss. 7517–771.

25. "English Attitudes to the Irish in England, 1789–1900," in *Immigrants and Minorities in British Society,* ed. Colin Holmes (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1978).

26. Luke Gibbons provides an excellent critique of Gilley's argument by taking apart the idea of "benevolent stereotypes." "Race against Time: Racial Discourse and Irish History," in *Transformations in Irish Culture* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1996), 155–56.

Historian Roy Foster has also engaged in the debate about these images. In *Paddy and Mr. Punch,* Foster offers what he sees as a corrective to Curtis's study, which he describes as "convincing and original" but also "problematic."[27] While he concedes the presence of negative stereotypes of Irishness, Foster attempts to trace a more complex history of the dissemination of anti-Irish images through *Punch* magazine, insisting upon the pro-Irish politics of the magazine in its early years. Foster historicizes a shift in *Punch*'s representations of the Irish during the 1840s, proposing that the cause was the Young Ireland movement's endorsement of "physical force" as a justifiable political tactic in the struggle for Irish independence. For example, describing the history of *Punch*'s politics regarding the Famine, he claims that "*Punch*'s sympathy for the starving diminished in proportion as Irish public opinion demonstrated support for the extreme line taken by Young Ireland."[28]

Thus, Foster argues that *Punch*'s anti-Irish politics developed as a reaction to Irish nationalism, culminating in "the image of the bestial and violent Irishman" that coincided with the emergence of Fenianism.[29] For Foster, this causative narrative implies that such images are not an example of racism but part of a reactionary political shift, one that Foster finds 'reasonable' to some degree because of its condemnation of violence. But such an analysis does not admit the possibility that British reactions to Irish nationalism and anti-Irish racism are mutually constitutive, that the presence of one does not imply the absence of the other. In addition, Foster narrates the development of these images from a perspective compatible with statist historiography, in which counterinsurgency is cast as simply reactive rather than productive and proactive. Keeping in mind these limitations, what still interests me is the historical narrative that grounds Foster's argument—that the emergence of violent resistance to colonial domination serves as the historical fuel for the images in *Punch.* Despite its limitations, Foster's critique remains an useful point of entry for my reading of these cartoons, for while I am of course intervening in the debate about anti-Irish racism, the ideology is at this point a given in my analysis rather than the focus of my argument. Instead, I want to suggest that what distinguishes the cartoons of Fenianism in the pages of *Punch* is the representational preoccupation with the interface between the state and Irish insurgency and with the questions of citizenship, something for which Forster's analysis leaves room.

27. R. F. Foster, *Paddy and Mr. Punch: Connections in Irish and English History* (London: Allen Lane / Penguin, 1993), 172.

28. Ibid. 178–80.

29. Ibid. 185.

Foster's work may seek to disavow the racialism and racism at work in these images, but at the same time, as Michael De Nie reminds us, Curtis's work ignores a whole body of images sympathetic to the Irish and flattens British press opinion, which is in fact quite "mixed and complex."[30] My work in this chapter does not focus primarily on this complexity, which De Nie has so ably explored in his study *The Eternal Paddy: Irish Identity and the British Press, 1798–1882.* Rather, I am interested in a set of newspaper writings and cartoons that document a shift in the ways that Irish anticolonial violence and Irish insurgents are described, marking the emergence of the figure of the "terrorist" as the antithesis of the British citizen subject. I also focus on the obsessive representation of the state in these images.

At the same time, as some of the images that follow demonstrate, we must recognize that, like Arnold's Celtophilia, seemingly "positive" images of Ireland are not the antithesis but the ideological obverse of the negative images of Fenianism. In fact, the persistent representation of the racialized Fenian terrorist emerges paradoxically in a matrix of ideas about a feminized, helpless Ireland that demanded British benevolence and protection. Many of the cartoons seek to distinguish Fenianism from what is presented as an obedient, even passive Irish populace who might be ruled successfully by Britain.[31] In fact, not only is Ireland represented as quaint although backward, it is also seen as an object of sympathy (Fig. 3–5). In most cases, a feminized Ireland is not raced in the same way as her Fenian counterpart. However, this distinction between feminized, vulnerable Hibernia and recalcitrant violent Fenian insurgency seeks to rationalize colonial rule and state violence in Ireland. As Amit Rai has argued persuasively, Enlightenment ideas of sympathy stand as part of "a practice elaborated out of a broader civilizing mission."[32] Thus the long-standing idea of defenseless, sympathetic Hibernia is not a disruption to colonialist insistence on an unruly, racially other Ireland, but an essential part of that imperial project. It justifies intervention and the assertion of power in the name of protectionism. The dyad of Hibernia–Fenian also speaks to contested Victorian ideas about Irish racial identity and about the (im)possibility of Irish assimilation into British culture and assent to British rule.

While debates within the field of Irish Studies focus on the function of race in these images and often stage disagreements about whether Victorian

30. De Nie 13.

31. De Nie points out, however, that this distinction coexisted with a seemingly contradictory tendency in the press to be suspicious of all Irishmen as potential Fenians (157).

32. *Rule of Sympathy: Sentiment, Race and Power, 1750–1850* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), xiv.

public opinion in Britain was in fact "positive" or "negative," racist or not, they usually overlook the representation of "terrorism," the British citizen, and the state that I have outlined here. Perhaps this is because many of these cartoons do not contain explicit representations of the British male citizen. However, by inviting and anticipating certain identifications, fantasies, and structures of affect from the viewer, these visual texts work to interpellate the spectator as a certain kind of citizen with a particular relation to both "terrorism" and the state. In order to read these cartoons as a form of visual culture that functions in this way, I will turn to the tools of psychoanalysis as theorized by Freud and scholars working within the fields of Feminist Studies, Film Studies, and Postcolonial Studies. My work in this chapter follows Anne McClintock's proposal of a "situated psychoanalysis." She defines this practice as "a culturally contextualized psychoanalysis that is simultaneously a psychoanalytically informed history."[33] Such an approach provides a way to understand that ideas of terrorism and citizenship in this period are not just ideological formations but also psychic formations. The viewer is not only interpellated but is asked to interpellate himself or herself in relation to the scene; sociopolitical processes of identity formation thus imply psychological processes of identification of self and others. Hopefully, my reading of Victorian culture adds weight to McClintock's assertion that "psychoanalysis and material history are mutually necessary for a strategic engagement with unstable power."[34] As we will see, the complex staging of identifications and disaffiliations, of recognition and misrecognition, make possible the forms of social, political, and psychic resistance that exist for citizens who are recruited and subjects who are excluded.

THE IDEA OF "TERRORISM" IN THE VICTORIAN PRESS

Before turning to the cartoons themselves, I want to contextualize them as part of the appearance of the modern idea of "terrorism" that I have already briefly described. An examination of newspaper accounts of Fenian violence in the late 1860s shows the emergence of an ideology of terrorism that shares central elements with contemporaneous cartoons. The *Times*'s columns on Fenianism in the days following the Clerkenwell bombing in 1867 provide a useful, rich example of the crystallization of a discourse of "terrorism." Even

33. *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 72.

34. Ibid. 73.

in the days directly preceding the bombing, articles continued to describe Fenianism as they had for several years: as a form of "anarchy," as "semi-civilized and semi-savage," as a manifestation of "the inveterate habit of Irishmen to take the law into their own hands."[35] Thus, as in the comedic art of weekly satiric magazines, the *Times* presents Fenianism as irrational, atavistic, racial, and cultural in its origins, and most importantly, as the antagonist and antithesis of the state, in particular its legal codes and apparatuses.

Over and over, columns place Fenianism in counterpoint with the law, which it is seen to undermine and through which it must be repressed. For example, the *Times* writes:

> Law is the strength of this country, and law must, to a certain extent, be the weakness of its Government. We do not tolerate either a Government above law, or a class above law, or anything above law. It is this universal submission to the reign of law, that now enables a single faction to insult the Government and Constitution of this country, the greater part of the population in this island, a great part of that of Ireland, and, more than all, the old English feeling against unjustifiable homicide. In what other country in the world would such proceedings be allowed to pass unchallenged?[36]

In an argument already familiar to us from the pages of *Culture and Anarchy,* the *Times* journalist asserts that the British principle of liberty has been stretched too far, allowing for anarchy and an undermining of the nation-state. The law as "the strength of this country" must respond to any claim against the absolute sovereignty of the British state, and must establish that no subject is above the law. In other words, the phantasmatic national "we" in this passage is consolidated through a universal acquiescence to the law as a foundation of citizenship, a foundation of submission that supersedes the claim to liberty. Once again, Fenianism makes this vision of the nation-state and its citizenry both necessary and possible.

After Clerkenwell, representations of Fenianism begin to take new shapes. The *Times,* which historians Quinlivan and Rose argue is representative of much of the British mainstream reaction to Fenianism,[37] calls the explosion

35. The *Times,* December 11, 1867, from an article on demonstrations against the execution of the Manchester martyrs. For a historical account of the executions as well as the public outcry against them in Ireland and Britain, see Paul Rose, *The Manchester Martyrs: The Story of a Fenian Tragedy* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1970).

36. The *Times,* December 11, 1867.

37. Quinlivan and Rose 56. Also 33: "The rise of Fenianism was accompanied by a reaction reflected in the editorials of *The Times,* horrified at the apparently innate ingratitude of the Irish. They reflect the level of popular prejudice directed against all those remotely connected with Fenianism."

"a crime of unexampled atrocity"[38] and "the worst crime in English history."[39] Perhaps reacting against contemporaneous amnesty movements that argued that transgressive political acts be granted a different status than ordinary crimes, mainstream British journalism immediately insisted on the fundamental, unqualified criminality of the act. The repetitive language of "ferocity" and "murder" served to depoliticize the rescue attempt. While the London police force knew almost immediately and the newspapers reported in some instances that the aim of the Clerkenwell explosion was to rescue prisoners rather than to injure civilians, the *Times* provides a narrative that conforms to a definition of terrorism as destruction devoid of morality or political aim. The day after the explosion, a journalist writes, "The perpetrators of this outrage *did not miscalculate* the potency of the weapon they used."[40] Several days later, a column in the *Times* reads:

> It is necessary to realize the extent of this destruction in order to appreciate the atrocity of the crime by which so fearful an explosion was deliberately produced in a narrow street . . . whatever was the instrument, its employment was an act of *wholesale and deliberate murder.* The effect on the wall of the prison was *not miscalculated,* and *the horrible mutilations and deaths we record this morning must have been more or less foreseen.*[41]

It is not my intention to engage in an argument about the motives of the Fenians who planned the Clerkenwell rescue, although it is worth noting that all subsequent accounts of the incident by Fenian writers avowed that an attack on the prison and the liberation of Fenians were the only aims of the explosion. Instead, I wish to call attention to the suggestive rhetorical strategy at work in these articles. The excerpt above first names the Fenian act as "wholesale and deliberate murder," insisting upon its effortless classification within a legal code of criminality and on its depoliticization. The multiple meanings of the descriptive "wholesale" indicate an insistence that the explosion is unquestionably an act of murder, is indiscriminate in its victims, and is the expression of a widespread Fenian strategy of such violence.

The passage narrates the events of the Clerkenwell explosion with an emphasis on the intentionality of those Fenians involved. Using the rhetor-

38. The *Times,* December 14, 1867.

39. The *Times,* December 16, 1867. Similar descriptives can be found in contemporaneous issues of other British newspapers, such as the *Spectator.*

40. December 14, 1867.

41. My emphasis, December 16, 1867.

ical strategy of negation, the writer anticipates and refutes the possibility that the explosion was unintentional by declaring that "the effect . . . was not miscalculated" and that the results must have been "foreseen." This sentence is written in the passive voice, replicating in syntax a discourse in which invisible, undetectable Fenians are known only through their acts of violence. Finally, the intention of the Fenians is described in the sensational language and use of pathos and the grotesque typical of most journalistic accounts of Clerkenwell. Deaths and injuries are characterized as "horrible mutilations," as "frightful disfigurements, and dreadful agonies,"[42] and as "the slaughter of a number of innocent people; the burning and mangling of women and helpless infants, the destruction of poor men's homes and poor men's property."[43] Such rhetoric inaugurates the use of ideologies of gender and family to pose the Fenian as a manifestation of anarchic masculinity. The bodies destroyed and maimed by Fenianism are "women and helpless infants," while the impact of the explosion on working-class men is figured through the destruction of their property and the domestic space over which they hold authority. This narrative produces a gendered split between the perpetrators and victims of violence; it also identifies the Fenian as he who intrudes upon and destroys the domain of a British male authority that transcends class. Even the relatively Liberal *Newcastle Daily Chronicle* declared, "English liberalism cannot grasp a hand which smells rank with the blood of her children, slaughtered in mere wantonness of fanaticism."[44]

Such representations of Fenianism were soon encapsulated within the term "terror" that laid the groundwork for a generalized idea of "terrorism." Numerous newspaper accounts identify the aim of Fenianism as the creation of "terror" in the United Kingdom and describe Fenianism as an invisible force within Britain that had created a terror holding all of society in its grip.[45] For example, several days after the explosion, a *Times* column, typical of most mainstream newspaper accounts, states, "Their [Fenians'] object is now apparently *to create a terror throughout the United Kingdom,* and such is their unscrupulous ferocity that with a large class of the community they may so far succeed."[46] A member of the House of Lords made a claim, often cited

42. December 17, 1867.

43. December 14, 1867.

44. Cited in Charles Townshend, *Political Violence in Ireland: Government and Resistance since 1848* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1983), 65.

45. Quinlivan and Rose 95–96. See also Larcom Papers, which collect clippings of articles from the *Times, Spectator,* etc., in 1866, all of which describe Fenianism as a form of "terror" or even as a "Reign of Terror." NLI, Larcom Ms. 7691.

46. My emphasis, December 14, 1867.

in the press, that "terror had seized society" because of Fenianism.[47] Thus, "terror" was figured as the means and end of Fenianism as well as its effect on the British nation. Indeed, such ideas were so rampant in the press that Lord Mayo would write to Disraeli in 1868 describing the phenomenon as a kind of uncontrolled epidemic: "After the Fenian fever of the last two years, constitutional conflicts appear flat to the masses."[48]

This "terror" was produced in part by racial panic concerning the presence of potentially violent Fenians in Britain. Well before the bombing of Clerkenwell Prison, British newspapers argued that this form of anticolonial insurgency was racial in its origins. In one of its frequent reports on military drilling of Fenianism in rural Ireland, the *Times* argued that the willingness to take up mindlessly a collective cause and act on its behalf, to participate in the psychology of the mob, was an expression of Irish national character:

> The Irishman, on the contrary [to the Saxon], is never so much at home as when he has other Irishman at his elbows, with others before and behind. He is manufactured in a sheet like a pound's worth of postage stamps, and it takes some force to make him think and act for himself, and do just one penny's work and no more. If we are to look for the reasons of this, they will be found, perhaps, in purity of race, in simplicity of life, and in social uniformity. The Irishman is generally a pure Celt; he lives commonly very much as his fathers did before him and as his neighbors do now. . . . These aboriginal races are meant to follow the first instinct, "Be fruitful and multiply," and the first command, "Replenish the earth." They fall naturally into columns, and teem off to richer lands and kinder skies.[49]

This article represents participation in the Irish Republican Brotherhood and other forms of Fenian political practice as a manifestation of an "aboriginal" racial identity, specifically a communal sensibility and culture that is premodern and prepolitical.

The *Spectator* explains Fenianism in similarly racialist terms in an 1865 article titled "Fenian Folly," an attempt to calm any public "terror" about the threat of Fenianism to the Union as well as the security of Britain:

47. Cited in Quinlivan and Rose 95.

48. Cited in Leon Ò Broin, *Fenian Fever: An Anglo-American Dilemma* (New York: New York University Press, 1971), as the epigraph for the book.

49. Report on military drilling of Fenians in Cork, the *Times,* March 22, 1864.

> The Irish are a peculiar people, *not* zealous of good works. With all their admirable and endearing qualities, they are the most wilfully and pertinaciously unlucky race on earth. Their innate destitution, or rather defiance of logic, goes so deep into their nature as to mar nearly everything they say or do. In political and social matters especially this national peculiarity drives their best friends half wild with perplexity and despair. . . . They are in a chronic state of discontent, ever and anon menacing to break out into open sedition against the kindest and justest Govt they ever had, and persist in attributing their miseries to Saxon rule because their fathers used to do so before them—shutting their eyes to the two main facts,—that they are governed on wholly different principles to those under which their fathers were governed, and that of all the grievances and wrongs of which their fathers might rightly complain but one or two remain unredressed and unremedied now, and that no govt ever was so bad as that of their native chiefs . . . the subject is one of extraordinary difficulty, and the Irish, instead of contributing anything to its elucidation, contrive to involve it in almost hopeless complication by their utterly irrational, antique, half-Maori, half-Hindoo ideas about property in land, and by mixing up under the general term "Tenant-right" a claim which in itself is indisputably just and fair, and a claim which is utterly mischievous and monstrous.[50]

Once again, colonialist ideas of Irish national character and of Irish history rely on an assertion that Irish anticolonial politics is an expression of racial atavism. Not only are Fenians unable to understand the foundational truths of British rule in Ireland, but their own political doctrines and practices are reduced to "utterly irrational, antique, half-Maori, half-Hindoo ideas." This formulation underscores the construction of Fenianism as irrational and premodern, and associates the Irishness from which it springs with the indigenous cultures and populations of other colonies. Thus, racialization serves as one of the primary ways through which Fenianism and by extension Irishness are understood. David Lloyd has written of this "conflation of the virtually coeval stereotypes of the terrorist and the Irishman, a conflation whose popular circulation probably originates with the Fenian campaigns of the 1860s. In this conflation, the Irishman is drawn to terrorism because of the violent and sentimental or fanatic nature of his racial psychology. Violence becomes a racially rather than a socially or historically conditioned characteristic."[51] The

50. The *Spectator,* September 16, 1865.
51. *Ireland after History* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1999), 66.

newspaper material makes apparent the development of these "coeval" stereotypes, imbricated through the common logic of racial determination. While the language of "terrorism" is still developing, the groundwork is laid in such narratives that locate the origins of Fenianism in a racial identity that predisposes the Irish to particular forms of politics and to violence.

The racialism and racism central to journalistic representations of Fenianism also hinge on the question of detectability, the identification of Fenians circulating in Ireland and Great Britain. As Fenianism came to be understood as a secret organization whose members remained unidentified and infiltrated the British military and even the police force, newspapers emphasized the "invisibility" of the source of terror. The British state grappled with the problem of identifying and prosecuting Fenians who might blend into the British public or who might even "pass" as loyal British subjects serving the state. One counterinsurgent tactic employed was the use of photography to document suspected Fenian prisoners, well before the advent of the mug shot in Britain.[52] Thus, the racialism of newspaper narratives, supplemented by visual representations in cartoon art, can be read as a material and cultural scopic drive to establish the visibility of the Fenian, visibility that was integral to any successful strategy of counterinsurgency by the British state. Without an epidermal marker to construct as the basis of racial identification, the possibility of Fenians who could pass and blend into the English crowd marked the failure of both racial classification and policing structures. Texts that saturated the public sphere in the United Kingdom consolidated and disseminated a racialized construction of Irish "terrorism" that might work against such failures and against the success of Fenian strategies of insurgency. The simianized and racialized body of the Fenian is rendered visible to British citizens and the state. Racial genealogies of Fenianism contributed to this effect by harnessing racial science to colonialist politics. As I have argued elsewhere, "British popular culture disseminated an ideology of the menacing yet grotesque and easily captured Fenian, enacting a paradoxical gesture of inciting viewers' fear yet reassuring the public of the state's efficacy in stamping out the threat."[53]

These texts must also be read in relation to the British state's technologies of counterinsurgency, to which the question of identification by race was fundamental. For example, after the Manchester van rescue, police raided

52. For a brief history of the internment and photographic documentation of suspected Fenians in Ireland, see Breandan MacSuibhne and Amy E. Martin, "Fenians in the Frame: Photographing Irish Political Prisoners," *The Field Day Review* 1 (2005):100–19.

53. Ibid. 117.

Irish neighborhoods in Britain, arrested dozens of Irish men randomly on the basis of accent and appearance, and kept them imprisoned for days without due process.[54] These arrests mirrored the large-scale internment of suspected Fenians in Ireland, where the suspension of habeas corpus made their long-term imprisonment without conviction possible.[55] Back in Britain, British citizens, recruited as participants in counterinsurgency by pleading newspaper articles and by the offer of large rewards, also engaged in such random identification on the basis of race, and local police received constant reports of anyone appearing Irish—identified by physical features, name, or accent.[56] Annie Besant wrote that in the months after the Manchester rescue, "the fiercest race-passions at once blazed out into flame" and declared that it was "dangerous for an Irish worker to be alone in a group of Englishman."[57] As the British state grappled with the problem of the antistate terrorist, it seems that the potentially undetectable Fenian could be brought to justice only by what the secret of race could be made to reveal.

The racialization and gendering of Fenianism serves another ideological function—that of countering the colonial state's terrifying inability to repress anticolonial insurgency when it took the decentered form of Fenianism. This use of race operates much like British and Irish Unionist responses to earlier insurrectionary movements in Ireland as described by Luke Gibbons:

> The threat posed by the anonymity and inscrutability of these societies was such that the authorities felt compelled to lift the veil, as it were, and impute some kind of organizing consciousness behind the scenes to their otherwise incomprehensible behavior. It was as if the very fact that certain activities were imbricated in a narrative without a determinate leader or organizing consciousness was sufficient to constitute them as "violent." Given the basic assumption, moreover, that a subaltern culture was incapable of achieving unity or even intelligibility on its own terms, the organizing principle was invariably ascribed to some external agent, or form of manipulation from above.[58]

54. Quinlivan and Rose 54. They also tell the humorous but suggestive anecdote of a man "with a strong Irish brogue" who turned himself in to the Manchester Police "as the only means I have of saving myself being arrested over and over again wherever I go, as a Fenian" (54).

55. See MacSuibhne and Martin.

56. Quinlivan and Rose 50–51.

57. *Autobiographical Sketches* (London: Freethought, 1885), 42.

58. *Transformations in Irish Culture* 141.

While Gibbons looks at the attribution of French influence and Jacobite politics to explain the organizing consciousness of the Whiteboys, I want to use his generative analysis to argue that, in the case of Fenianism, racialist and racist logic stepped in as attempts to recenter and ascribe a paradoxically internal "external" agent. Nature became the external agent that endowed "the Irish" with such violent tendencies. This racialism formed the foundation of counterinsurgent representations and practices in the United Kingdom, and as Ranajit Guha reminds us, "[t]o know the cause of a phenomenon is already a step taken in the direction of controlling it. To *investigate* and thereby *understand* the cause of rural disturbances is an aid to measures 'deemed expedient to *prevent a recurrence of similar disorders.*'"[59] In the analysis that follows, I will read newspaper discourse as creating a system of knowledge like the one that Guha describes, an ideology of counterinsurgency that denies the complexities and recalcitrance of Fenianism by recentering the movement through representation. The dissemination of a specifically racialized idea of "terrorism" denied Fenianism its complex political formations and rationalities. It is the duty of the spectator citizen to participate in the identification of the Fenianism by the state and to know the terrorist as the other through which that citizen understands himself.

The causes and forms of Fenianism were invoked to legitimate a program of counterinsurgency by the state, one that was advocated by many newspapers during the period. As we saw in the cartoon of the Herculean Gladstone, there is an immediately apparent connection between an emerging idea of "terrorism" and the legitimacy of state violence that transgressed the most fundamental principles and ideologies of the nation-state. Consider the following excerpt from the *Times:*

> . . . As to the Fenian Conspiracy itself, it must be evident that the time is past for clemency and forbearance. With traitors and assassins such as these there can be but one course. . . . We would impress upon our readers the duty of looking at these events with as much calmness as is consistent with human nature, of remembering that not every Irishman,—nay, not even every processionist and every listener to seditious speeches, is a Fenian. The conspiracy to which these Clerkenwell assassins belong is probably directed by a few, and its active co-operators may be only some thousands in the whole kingdom. This leaven might, indeed, if left to itself, soon leaven the whole lump; and it is therefore necessary to remove it at once.[60]

59. "The Prose of Counter-Insurgency," in *Selected Subaltern Studies,* ed. Ranajit Guha and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 74.

60. December 14, 1867.

While the *Times,* in an uncharacteristic moment of restraint, tries to unhinge Fenianism from the general Irish population, the final metaphor makes clear the discourse of contagion that grounds ideas of "terror." Left unchecked, Fenianism might spread through all of Ireland, taking hold of a population already racially and culturally predisposed to such violence. The "one course," identified as the alternative to "clemency and forbearance," is in fact the excision or "removal" of Fenianism. The implications of violence quickly become more clear in a column two days later that states, "[The Clerkenwell outrage] excludes all considerations but one, that of protecting by every possible method, the elementary rights of humanity."[61] Thus, central to the emerging idea of "terror" and "terrorism" is a redeployment of a discourse of the rights and protection of British citizens. Since these "elementary rights of humanity" include the protection from the threat and "terror" inherent in Fenianism, the state finds justification in excluding any other considerations; it can justify all methods of counterinsurgency.

In an editorial in the same *Times* issue, the anonymous writer expands and extends this logic. He argues:

> It is impossible to dream of carrying on an open war against the English Government on their own soil, and if Fenianism, therefore, is to coerce us in this country, it must be by isolated acts of violence, more or less murderous, as the occasion prompts . . . to plot treason is to let loose the dogs of war in the heart of a country, and moreover, to let them loose beyond control. We can, then, have no parley with men in an attitude of menace. We must crush that at any cost. This is the first condition of political life, and it is nowhere so essential or so justifiable a principle as in a country like our own. We have free constitutional forms by which all classes are placed on an equality, and through which all may make known their wrongs and enforce their rights. To these forms we refer all appellants, and to these all must be compelled to submit. This outrage, therefore, will at least have the advantage of simplifying the course of the Government, and strengthening their hands. They cannot now hesitate in exerting the utmost vigour of the law, and they will be justified in doing so . . . [62]

This passage makes evident the intimate connection between the forms of Fenian insurgency, the counterinsurgent state, and the ideology of Liberal democracy. Once Fenianism has been established as a kind of transgression

61. My emphasis, December 16, 1867.
62. December 16, 1867.

in which war is brought onto English soil through random acts of violence, the "rule of law" is asserted. The state must "crush" Fenianism, and this state violence is sanctioned as the very foundation of the British nation-state; it is "the first condition of political life," for it establishes the order and boundaries through which the democratic state can function. State violence is necessary when the hegemonic compulsion for the citizen to protest only through the forms of the democratic state is circumvented or subverted. Ultimately, the Clerkenwell rescue serves an instrumental function, for it legitimates a simple course of action for the government—violent repression.

Such legitimation rests on a division between the democratic nation-state and the antistate violence that is its other. This division is central to a modern idea of terrorism in which, as described by Philip Schlesinger, "liberal democracies are embodiments of rationality, while terrorists, being violent, are quintessentially irrational."[63] Hence, in articles such as this editorial, we can see the staging of one of the founding mythologies and paradoxes of the modern state: the condemnation of violence in fact legitimates state violence, but recasts this institutionalized violence as morally necessary since it is solely reactionary and ensures the protection of citizens. This is a constitutive contradiction of the modern state—that it moves from coercion to hegemony but that shift is only made possible through the precondition or "first principle" of violence against its unruly subjects. Therefore, we can recognize that the consolidation of citizenship and the legitimation of the hegemonic state's violence both occur through the figure of the terrorist.

Beginning in the late 1860s, all of these elements—the racialization of Fenianism, the justification of counterinsurgency by the state, the redefinition of the boundaries of legitimate politics—are compressed and conveyed flawlessly into the idea of "terror." The shift from ideas of "terror" to the term "terrorism" followed quickly. This coincided with the splintering of Fenianism into various factions and the rise of agrarian insurgency in the form of the Land League out of a tradition that historian Charles Townshend describes as "Ribbo-Fenian."[64] Indeed, many cartoons and newspapers use the terms "Fenian" and "Land League" interchangeably, emphasizing the popular and government belief that the League was simply another incarnation of Fenianism.[65] By the late 1870s and early 1880s, the cartoons of Fenianism and the Land League not only had become more graphic in their depiction of

63. Philip Schlesinger, *Media, State, and Nation: Political Violence and Collective Identities* (London: Sage, 1991), 18.

64. See Townshend.

65. Townshend 133.

both the insurgent's and the state's violence, but the word "terrorism" began to be incorporated as an easily defined ideologeme, as in 1881's "Strangling the Monster" (Fig. 3–1). "Terrorism" entered public discourse as a word that could function symbolically in this image, requiring neither definition nor delineation; at the same time, the state's response had become more extreme. In a similar cartoon, "The Irish Devil-Fish" (Fig. 3–2), Gladstone prepares to stab an octopus that has the racialized head of an Irishman. Each of his tentacles is labeled with constructions central to British ideas of Fenianism and the Land League—"anarchy," "lawlessness," and "sedition"—and one of them is labeled "terrorism." Both of these cartoons occlude state violence as a founding principle of the nation-state; rather, the state, through the figure of Gladstone, is forced to mimic the violence of "terrorism" in order to prevent it.

These examples of the emerging discourse of Irish terrorism also reveal a contradictory oscillation between the rhetoric of terror, which incites panic in the reader or viewer, and the attempt to present insurgency in a form that contains and neutralizes it. While the violence of terrorism is represented as horrifying and terrifying, it is also rendered easily detectable, singular rather than decentered, and the violence of the state is represented as immediately effective. Thus the reading subject is placed in a state of ambivalence, caught between an incited terror and the reassurance that the figure of the "terrorist" is somehow neutralized. In some cartoons, however, the potential containment of Fenianism and agrarian insurgency seems as though it might fail. For example, as I noted in "Strangling the Monster," the hydra-headed creature symbolizes the perhaps insurmountable difficulty of identifying and centering decentered insurgencies; Gladstone's act of strangulation is not necessarily successful as his hands seek to grip the numerous "heads" or facets of the beast. In other images, the strategy of containment is more effective, and the Fenian is fixed until museumized, as "Time's Waxworks" (Fig. 3–3) shows. The "terrorist" is made a curiosity, placed in a chamber of horrors that locates him securely in the past, tidily dealt with like the other specters of colonial rebellion that have been repressed by the British state. The discourse of terrorism functions to hypostazise by any means necessary—relegating terrorist violence to the past and erasing the violence of the state in the process.

The prolific images of Fenianism in the mid-Victorian British press do more than simply provoke fear and reassure the reading public. To understand how they also work to facilitate certain forms of identification and identity-formation, we must look at the central elements used to represent the terrorist threat. Then we can begin to think through the place of the viewer in the

THE IRISH DEVIL-FISH.

"The creature is formidable, but there is a way of resisting it. • • • The Devil-fish, in fact, is only vulnerable through the head."
VICTOR HUGO'S *Toilers of the Sea*, Book IV., Ch. iii.

FIGURE 3–2. "The Irish Devil Fish," 1881

TIME'S WAXWORKS.

(1881 *JUST ADDED TO THE COLLECTION.*)

Mr. P. "HA! YOU'LL HAVE TO PUT HIM INTO THE CHAMBER OF HORRORS!"

FIGURE 3–3. "Time's Waxworks," 1881

complex politics of race, gender, class, and national identity, that these cartoons draw on and display.

FENIANISM AND THE STATE IN VICTORIAN CARTOON ART

We can first examine an early cartoon published on January 6, 1866, several weeks after "Rebellion Had Bad Luck" appeared in *Punch.* It is titled "The Real Irish Court; Or, the Head Centre and the Dis-senters" (Fig. 3–4). The caption identifies the image as a depiction of Irish law and justice, signified by the word "court," and it also implies a logic of revelation; the reader's expectations of the law and justice will be replaced by the "real," that which exists in contradiction to those expectations. The title's wordplay signals that the image represents Fenians: the "head centre" refers to James Stephens, and Fenians are identified as "Dis-senters," the hyphen disrupting a British concept of legitimate dissent. But this word also plays on its homonym—"dis-centre"—indicating that Fenianism is a politics without a center, without an authority. For while the caption seems to portend a portrait of Stephens, he is unidentifiable in the sea of Fenians that fills the cartoon's frame. The viewer does not know whether the "head centre" is an anonymous member of the mob or absent from the scene entirely. The leader's unclear presence or absence creates an anxiety concerning the location of Fenian authority; the inability to identify the leader suggests an insurgent power structure that will prove problematic to the imperial state. At the same time, the strange position of the political leader as well as Fenianism's refusal of a centered structure is (mis)read by the artist as evidence of the movement's irrational and chaotic politics. Stephens's authority is represented as empty, ineffectual, or entirely missing. While the leader as center is invoked, the decentralized organization of Fenianism renders the leader both paramount and undetectable. His indistinguishable presence calls attention to the anxiety about the identification of Fenian leaders and Fenians in general.[66]

66. This attention to the absent or invisible "head center" also refers to the very public failure of the state in its efforts to apprehend James Stephens several weeks before the cartoon was published. Stephens had eluded authorities for weeks after a warrant was issued for his arrest; he was finally captured and imprisoned in Dublin in November 1865 in what the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland described as "the heaviest blow we have struck yet against this seditious faction" (Ò Broin 18). But after less than a fortnight in Richmond Bridewell Prison, Stephens escaped with the aid of prison guards who were committed to the Fenian cause, an event that signaled to the British government that even the apparatuses of the colonial state, such as the police, were not secure from Fenian infiltration. This

FIGURE 3–4. "The Real Irish Court; Or, The Head Centre and the Dis-senters," 1866

The "real Irish court" turns out to be in fact a mob of undifferentiated Fenians; any connection between justice or legality and Fenianism is completely severed by the image. The ordered institutionality of a "court" is replaced by chaotic Fenian violence, which is identified, through their use of sticks and bricks, as primitive. The simianization and racialization of Irish features as well as the caricatured cultural costume suggests that this violence is an expression of racial and cultural identity. The image of the mob occludes Fenianism's sophisticated, extensive organization and the military experience of many of its members, substituting an image of anarchy. The mob is also entirely male and makes a connection between Fenianism and an anarchic collective masculinity, something that is more explicitly worked through in subsequent cartoons. The legal, legitimate power of violence held by the courtroom is replaced by a representation of violence that is wholly irrational, for the Fenians' attack has no object. There is no agent of the British state present, no colonial force against which the violence is perpetrated. Rather, sticks and bricks fly aimlessly, and the eventual victims of this random brutality are, in the end, other Fenians or other Irish people, for the bodies that lie on the ground wear the same costumes as those who stand above them. According to the cartoon, Fenianism lacks affective concern for its constituency and any political content or aim.[67] This moral and ethical vacuity is reinforced by the Fenian who sneaks away carrying the Fenian treasury from the scene; he signifies a lack of political commitment, a latent criminality, and motivation for personal gain.

By March 1866, just two months after "The Real Irish Court" was published, the British state had responded to Fenian insurgency by suspending habeas corpus in Ireland and by court-martialing over 150 soldiers and officers in an attempt to purge the British army of a pervasive IRB presence. In this context, *Punch* would run another cartoon that depicts a Fenian mob similar to the earlier image, but with some notable differences that reflect the shift in state policy. In "The Fenian-Pest"[68] (Fig. 3–5), the mob of Fenians reappears, although this time armed with swords, pikes, and guns,

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image engages implicitly with the effectiveness of colonial law and order and the difficulties of state authorities in dealing with a decentered mass movement whose tactics included the infiltration of state apparatuses into which colonial subjects had long been recruited.

67. This construction implicit in the cartoon corresponds to what Lloyd describes as "the construction of the terrorist as fanatical, pathological, hypermasculine, and incapable of affect. This involves often enough the contradictory representation of the activist as at once affectless and atavistically driven by emotion." Lloyd, "True Stories," in *Ireland after History* 62.

68. This is one of many cartoons assembled by Dublin Castle in the Larcom Papers Ms. 7691, NLI.

THE FENIAN-PEST.

HIBERNIA. "O MY DEAR SISTER, WHAT *ARE* WE TO DO WITH THESE TROUBLESOME PEOPLE?"
BRITANNIA. "TRY ISOLATION FIRST, MY DEAR, AND THEN———"

FIGURE 3–5. "The Fenian-Pest," 1866

weapons that constitute them as a more serious threat. Here a clear object of their violence is represented. A single Fenian breaks from the lemminglike momentum of the crowd[69] to menace two women, Hibernia and Britannia, female embodiments of the Irish and British nation respectively. The complex gender dynamics in this cartoon function to represent the relations between Fenianism, Ireland, and the colonial state and to naturalize these relations into a hegemonic narrative of the state, insurgency, and counterinsurgency. It is only through recourse to Victorian ideologies of gender that the image can achieve its allegorization of the interface between the state and anticolonial insurgency.

If the hypermasculinity of the Fenian signifies the ungovernable premodernity of which insurgency is a manifestation, then, as for Arnold, it is in Irish femininity and a feminized Ireland that colonialist hope resides. In the cartoon, Fenian violence is directed against a female Erin; the figure of Hibernia, a young, vulnerable, faceless maiden with shamrocks in her hair, flees from the insurgent who threatens her. In a staging of Unionist political logic, the majority of the Irish suffer from the menace of anticolonial insurgency, and Hibernia therefore requires protection. This threat is represented as at once violent and sexual, as the position and placement of the phallic sword imply; Fenianism, at first opportunity, will engage in the rape and perhaps murder of Ireland. A gendered narrative serves to shore up the protectionism that justifies the violent repression of Fenianism by the British state.

However, this protectionist politics is not, as one might expect, represented through a male figure. Rather, to prevent this attack, Hibernia flees to the protection of Britannia, a figure who offers a very different femininity. Unlike the maiden Hibernia (and the temporal progressive logic of national maturation is quite instructive here), Britannia is a mature woman, a virago, agent of a militarized femininity indicated by her Roman breastplate and helmet, clenched fists, and her foot that literally "stamps out" rebellion.[70] This last gesture clearly connects Britannia with the state, particularly its counterinsurgent violence. The caption confirms this association. In response to Hibernia's query about what to do with "these people," a phrase that enacts a strict

69. The regimentation of this mob suggests an army or military formation, perhaps a reference to infiltration of the British Army by Fenians or to the military training of the IRB that was overseen by Irish and Irish American veterans of the U.S. Civil War.

70. For a historical account of the appearance of the figure of Britannia, see Gerald Newman, *The Rise of English Nationalism: A Cultural History, 1740–1830,* rev. ed. (New York: St. Martin's, 1997), 77–80. For a theoretical account of women's relation to the nation as symbols of national collectivity, particularly as allegorical figures such as Britannia, see Nira Yuval-Davis and Flora Anthias, introduction to *Woman-Nation-State* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1989).

division between insurgents and the rest of the Irish nation, Britannia replies, "Try isolation first, my dear, and then—" Britannia's unfinished sentence gestures toward state repression through both extralegal and violent means. The cartoon narrates state violence as those unspeakable yet necessary measures to which the state must resort when all else fails, as the result when the rational legal responses reach their limit and fail.

Britannia here is also emblematic of Victoria herself, of the "queen's authority," which *Punch* identified as that which Fenians aimed to destroy.[71] Therefore, Victoria, embodiment of the domestic and colonial strength of the British nation-state, is restored to her position as unassailable synecdoche of British authority, the maternal figure who must discipline the Fenian as the paternal John Bull did in the earlier cartoon.[72] Simultaneously, the use of a female figure of the nation-state narrates counterinsurgent violence in a very particular way. Within Victorian constructions of normative gender, violence, in particular political violence, was an essentially male phenomenon and belonged to the masculine domain of politics. Why not figure the state as a man, then? By reworking the expectations of gender norms, the butch virago Britannia suggests a fantasy[73] concerning the violence of the state. That the repression of Fenianism is enacted through a female body indicates that this violence is somehow "unnatural" and would not occur normally. In other words, the reversal of expectation concerning gender implies that the state, here identified with the woman, is not fundamentally or 'naturally' violent. Instead, it is driven to this violence, to this assumption of masculine attributes, by the threat of Fenianism. Counterinsurgency is not a foundational element of the modern state; instead it is represented as unnatural yet necessary, as solely reactionary rather than originary.

If the image legitimates state repression of Fenianism, it also unveils the intimate connection between such counterinsurgency and Unionism. The

71. Untitled article accompanying cartoon, *Punch,* March 3, 1866.

72. Deirdre David makes the important point that Victorian representations of Britannia were inextricably bound with colonialist ideology: "In the Victorian period, the allegorical female figure 'Reduc'd' by the loss of her American colonies [in eighteenth-century representations] has become the actual queen plumped up by the acquisition of vast amounts of territory. The metaphor of mother country evokes, of course, Victoria herself as the great Britannic mother, ruling with maternal severity and sympathy her own eminently respectable large family, her own British subjects, and her own subjugated natives." *Rule Britannia: Women, Empire, and Victorian Writing* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995), 6.

73. I use the term "fantasy" in relation to the state following the work of Jacqueline Rose. Rose reminds us that Freud describes fantasies as "protective fictions" and elaborates upon this definition to argue "that fantasy . . . plays a central, constitutive role in the modern world of states and nations . . . " *States of Fantasy* (Oxford: Clarendon), 4–5.

cartoon stages Union as a relation of sisterhood and of protection. Hibernia requires the guardianship and defense provided by the British state; she seeks it out, and thus places her foot upon "rebellion" as well, endorsing and participating in state violence against insurgency. A feminized Ireland, which Matthew Arnold identified with the Irish inability to self-govern or succeed in politics, can be incorporated into the United Kingdom as a docile and willing participant. This representation of Ireland has the hypermasculine Fenian as its obverse, as that which must be expelled in order for Union to be maintained. In the image, the Fenian stands outside the relation of Union, fixing his gaze on that which he would assault. At first glance, he seems to reach for his weapon, to pull it out from under his coat so that he might attack. But, in fact, his gesture and demeanor are ambivalent and indecipherable. Is he watching the union of Britannia and Hibernia with a menacing or a horrified expression? Is he about to brandish his weapon or to hide it under his coat in the face of effective state authority? Is Hibernia, framed between Britannia and the Fenian, safe or vulnerable? The cartoon suggests that the suspension of habeas corpus, the willingness of the British state to move past "isolation" to other measures, will resolve the indeterminacy of this scene.

It is important to note that the gender politics of such images also denies the active role of women in Fenianism. In "The Fenian Pest," the female Fenian is not only absent but seems an impossibility—replaced by the feminized nation. I want to draw attention to this occlusion because it reveals how representations of Fenianism are tied to a rigid construction of such violence as masculine. The representation of the Fenian as male, however, marks less an absence than an elision. Women were quite active in various aspects of Fenian politics and practices, including the smuggling of money and arms into England and Ireland and participation in such acts as the Clerkenwell explosion.[74] This inability to account for women's participation in actions soon to be named terrorist, the erasure of women's historical involvement in Fenianism, is reflected in state discourses and measures in the period as well. Legal-juridical apparatuses were unable to calculate and to police female Fenians. For example, when Ellen O'Leary and Mary O'Donovan Rossa returned from a mission to Paris, a crisis ensued. While the police force in Dublin wished to follow standard procedure according to the 1866 suspension of habeas corpus, the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland intervened. He suggested instead a brief arrest, a careful search by "polite policemen," and then

74. Liz Curtis, *The Cause of Ireland: From the United Irishmen to Partition* (Belfast: Beyond the Pale, 1994), 69.

their release. He cited as his reason that it was "ticklish work to meddle with women" in regard to such matters.[75] This anecdote and others of its kind serve to show that this textual elision is related to a larger aporia within the legal calculus; these gendered constructions of Fenianism found expression in the apparatuses of the state.

Later images in *Punch* would replay the scene of "The Fenian-Pest," engaging in a repetition but also demonstrating the shift in state counterinsurgency during the ensuing decades. By 1881 the British state's position in relation to the Land League[76] and continued Fenian agitation was even more extreme. In "Two Forces" (Fig. 3–6), a cartoonist reworks the allegorical representation of Britannia, Hibernia, and the figure of the Fenian with several important differences. In this repetition, the stance of the Fenian and the position of Hibernia are in no way ambiguous. The Fenian, now wearing a hat labeled "Anarchy," calling to mind Arnold's *Culture and Anarchy,* is obviously threatening both Hibernia and Britannia. He wields the most primitive of weapons, an armful of rocks, one of which he prepares to hurl at the two women; this emphasis on the uncivilized nature of his violence corresponds with the assertion of agrarian insurgency as the most atavistic, apolitical form of resistance as well as an intensification during the 1870s and 1880s of the representation of Irish anticolonialism as the very antithesis of the progress of British civilization. Hence, the racialization of the Fenian's features, what L. Perry Curtis calls "prognathism,"[77] is more extreme, and his eyes are not even visible to the viewer, his powers of vision and his humanity eradicated by the anarchy in which he is clothed.

The allegorical representation of Britain and Ireland has changed as well. While the primary elements of the cartoon are the same, Hibernia is no longer caught between Fenianism and Britain. Once again faceless, she weeps and cowers in the robes of Britannia; as a vulnerable protectorate who requires the safety and security of Union, Ireland becomes associated with a weaker, more assailable femininity that requires supplementation through the vigorous force of Britannia. Britannia now stands directly between the

75. Quinlivan and Rose 13–14.

76. My intention here is not to conflate the later agitation of the Land League with Fenianism. However, the organizations were interconnected and sometimes synonymous in the British press. For an investigation of how the Land League did in some ways develop out of Fenianism as well as for a most useful discussion of the vexed and complex relationships between the movements, see Liz Curtis 85–86.

77. Curtis derives this term from the work of the nineteenth-century physiognomist Pieter Camper, and uses it to describe representations that racialize the face by giving it projecting features, especially the mouth and jaw (*Apes and Angels* xix).

TWO FORCES.

FIGURE 3–6. "Two Forces," 1881

Fenian and Hibernia as the central element in the frame. The picture is divided into two halves, corresponding to the "two forces" that give the image its title, and this division is enacted by the weapon that Britannia holds, a sword that represents "the law." By wielding "the law" in its most violent incarnation, Britannia enters into her full identification with the British state as that embodiment of the nation that establishes order, suppresses anarchy, and preserves the Union of Great Britain and Ireland. The presence of the sword makes the violent response of Britain to Fenianism and the Land League more conspicuous. The Law and the implicit violence by which it functions also segregate the insurgent, separating him from both Britain and Ireland, the "United Kingdom," through a kind of partition that divides the image.

Throughout the 1860s, 70s, and 80s, countless cartoons of this type appeared in the pages of *Punch* and other comedic serials such as *Judy* and *Fun*. These images allow us to investigate further how representations of "terrorism" participate in the redefinition of citizenship that occurred during Reform agitation during the 1860s. Through a complex politics of identification and the exhortation to "terror" and anger, these cartoons interpellate the viewer in relation to the state and to a particular idea of citizenship that is defined as the antithesis of Fenian "terrorism." In other words, an explication of these images that accounts for the psychological position of the reader suggests that they function to interpellate viewing subjects as obedient citizens of a counterinsurgent state.

Most instructive is the cartoon "The Fenian Guy Fawkes" (Fig. 3–7), published on December 28, 1867, just two weeks after the bombing of Clerkenwell Prison. Here the victim of Fenian violence is no longer a feminine Hibernia but innocent British women and children. The now familiar Fenian sits atop a keg of gunpowder, oblivious to his own impending demise, perhaps due to the suicidal and homicidal logic of his politics or out of ignorance. The cartoonist, John Tenniel, draws on the historical precedent of Guy Fawkes, an identification that, by invoking the history of the Gunpowder plot, mobilizes anti-Catholicism and places Fenianism in a historical continuum of attempts to destroy the authority and ascendancy of a distinctly Protestant British nation.[78] The enormous barrel of gunpowder serves no function other than destruction; the attempt to rescue Fenians from imprisonment is completely

78. The comparison to the Gunpowder Plot appeared immediately in journalistic accounts of the Clerkenwell bombing; for example, on the day after the bombing, a London *Times* article titled "Atrocious Fenian Outrage" called the incident "this modern Gunpowder Plot," while another referred to "[t]his new Gunpowder Treason," and the comparisons persisted in reportage during the weeks following the incident. See the *Times* [London], December 11, 1867, and December 14, 1867.

FIGURE 3–7. "The Fenian Guy Fawkes," 1867

elided in the cartoon. Instead the bomb, clearly about to explode, is placed in the midst of a domestic tableau, inducing the viewer's panic, or "terror," that the unwitting woman and children are about to die. As suggested by John Stuart Mill, the true victims of the Fenian are those vulnerable British subjects who are in the wrong place at the wrong time. The nursing mother in the background completes the domestic scene, identifying the victims as the mothers and reproducers of the nation. The echo with the figure of the Madonna and child further sanctifies the British mother and her children. The play on the idea of the "domestic" here is obvious. The domestic feminine space that the Fenian plans to destroy parallels the movement of insurgency into the "domestic" space of Britain itself, no longer quarantined in Ireland. At the same time, Fenianism threatens even the safety of the family's "domestic" space, suggesting that no Briton is secure from insurgent violence, even in the private space of the home.

This image signals one of the most prominent features of the discourse of "terrorism" that emerges right after the explosion at Clerkenwell. The enormous explosion occurred due to the use of too much gunpowder by an inexperienced Fenian bomb maker, and therefore a barrel of explosives that was supposed to blow a small hole in the wall of the prison in fact leveled a row of houses nearby.[79] However, as we have seen, newspapers and cartoons narrated this event as a random act of violence designed to murder civilians and to destroy the foundation of British civilization, an example of the inherent Irish propensity to violence. As in "The Fenian Guy Fawkes," this narrative of Clerkenwell posits the Irish Fenian as the racial and cultural converse of the ethical citizen-subject, as a subject so utterly lacking affective relation to the British nation that he might murder members of the national community. At the center of this figuration of the Fenian as the anti-citizen was the question of allegiance. The historical reference to Guy Fawkes suggests Irish Catholicism as a religious identity and practice disruptive to the allegiance of citizens to the nation-state.

The connection between masculinity and citizenship in the 1867 cartoon is significant as well. As Keith McClelland has argued, "the axial figure within the controversies of 1866–67 about who was to be enfranchised was the 'respectable working man.'"[80] Therefore, the ideology of citizenship that developed and was legislated during these years rested upon a particular ideal of masculinity. This ideal of "manhood" emphasized the moral role

79. For a contemporary account of Clerkenwell, see John Devoy, *Recollections of an Irish Rebel* (Shannon: Irish University Press, 1969), 248–51.

80. "'England's greatness, the working man,'" in Hall, McClelland, and Rendall 76–77.

of the respectable working-class male subject as a law-abiding citizen who performed his 'proper' social function as father and head of the household.[81] A gendered ideology of domesticity provided a foundation for the imagining of the ethical citizen-subject who was in the process of incorporation into the British nation-state through the extension of suffrage. Notably, in "The Fenian Guy Fawkes," the scene of the feminine domestic sphere is clearly working-class, suggesting that the Fenian stands in opposition to a male proletarian subject who might restore order and safety to this setting.

Read in this context, the Fenian's masculinity appears all the more unruly and stands clearly as the antithesis of the respectable male citizen-subject. Surrounded by women and children, subjects defined by their exclusion from the community of citizenship and by their need for protection by newly enfranchised proletarian men, the Fenian serves neither a matrimonial nor a paternal function; rather, he is the agent of the potential murder of those members of the nation's family that he has a moral imperative to protect. He straddles the keg of gunpowder, connecting the impending explosion and phallus. He exists as a terrifying phantasmatic counterpoint to the newly defined ethical masculine working-class citizen.[82]

If we read the figure of the Fenian in cartoons such as "Guy Fawkes" as the antitype to the respectable working-class man who is marshaled into citizenship after the 1867 Reform Acts, then we can also understand that the counterinsurgent ideology at work in these cartoons serves an instrumental disciplinary function in the formation of a new subset of British citizen-subjects. The Fenian defines the racial and cultural limits of citizenship. His representation participates in the construction of the ideal docile citizen through a process of inversion and negation. By definition, what a citizen *cannot* be is his inverse, an Irish "terrorist." (It is no coincidence that most Fenians who were arrested were charged with sedition and treason-felony, with the legal transgression of the most basic injunction of citizenship—allegiance to the crown and to the state.) These cartoons locate the Fenian insurgent outside of the legitimate, legal political protest in which the citizen can engage, and therefore he is subject to the violence of the nation-state. This implication is particularly striking in the context of Reform agitation by the proletariat in the years contemporaneous with Fenian insurgency.

The dynamics of identification in this comedic art work to consolidate British citizenship in terms of racial, cultural, moral, and national identity.

81. Ibid. 98–99.

82. John Newsinger, *Fenianism in Mid-Victorian Britain* (London: Pluto, 1994), 25.

The images render identification with the atavistic Fenian difficult if not impossible through the reworking of ideologies of gender and race, disrupting potential identifications between working-class protest (such as the contemporaneous Hyde Park riots) and Irish anticolonial nationalism, both of which were engaged in "physical force" insurgency against the state.[83] As a *Times* editorial on Fenianism that appeared in 1867 states, "From commiseration of the fate of a criminal to identification with his motives and glorification of his crime is just a step."[84] The politics of identification in these images establishes a distance and disaffiliation between the insurgent and the viewing subject. This matrix of identification, recognition, and the desire to protect suggests that these images engage in the formation of the subjectivity of the viewer, through the categories of gender, class, race, and national character.

In her groundbreaking work in the field of film theory, Laura Mulvey writes of the visual display of the woman as object, so that the female spectacle serves a double function. She writes, "[a] woman performs within the narrative; the gaze of the spectator and that of the male characters in the film are neatly combined without breaking narrative similitude."[85] While Mulvey writes about film narrative, the Victorian caricature functions similarly as a visual spectacle of woman whose narrative logic relies on a sophisticated structure of looking that situates the viewer in relation to that which is displayed. Indeed, the nursing woman in the image serves as a potential object of violence who elicits in the male viewer erotic desire channeled through the motif and norms of domesticity and its ideology of protectionism. The many children in the image consolidate the domestication of the scene as well. For female viewers, the cartoon suggests identification with woman as object and potential victim.[86] Certainly the representation of the women and children as likely victims invites the spectator's psychological relation to them through either identification or objectification. At the same time, such circuits of identification and objectification bind middle-class viewers to the working-class subjects in the image through cathection, encouraging a trans-

83. On panic in the British press about a potential alliance between Fenians and the Reform League, see ibid. 57.

84. The *Times,* December 16, 1867.

85. "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," in *Visual and Other Pleasures* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989), 19.

86. As Mulvey suggests, this objectification and identification contains the possibilities of resistance and disruption in its logic. The viewer has some agency to resist the identifications suggested by the cartoon. Of course, the threat represented by the Fenian suggests the potential failure of the image's attempt to objectify him and to render him inert.

class consolidation of national interest. In this way, the cartoon constructs national identity as a social and political relation at the same time that it participates in a psychological constitution of the citizen who is the counterpart of this sociopolitical process.

However, in this image, race and national character disturb what Mulvey describes as "neat combination" of male characters and the male spectator. The representation of the Irish nationalist relies on what I would call racial monstrosity. This representation of the Fenian as monster makes perfect sense, for, as Andrew Hock-Soon Ng has suggested, monsters "are projections of some ideological crisis, and become 'embodied' (such as in literature and/or through scientific classification) so that such anxieties can be 'controlled,' examined, understood, and, subsequently, resolved."[87] This use of the monstrous figures the Fenian as the locus of fear and loathing for the viewer, as abject or, as Jeffrey Jerome Cohen calls the monster, "the abjected fragment that enables the formation of all kinds of identities—personal, national, cultural, economic, sexual, universal, particular."[88] The male spectator finds it difficult if not impossible to identify with this kind of image and is instead invited to disavow the frightful and disgusting subhuman figure. The cartoon positions female spectators as objects of the Fenian's terror and violence, which also renders identification with him enormously forbidding. The Fenian is not afforded a gaze that corresponds to the gaze of the viewer; "Guy Fawkes" does not look at the women and children around him. Rather, he looks back at the viewer in a kind of terrifying mirror image; the spectator is invited to see this as a reflection of himself and what he might become[89] and then to disavow such an identification. The male spectator is invited to see the Fenian as a frightening inversion of himself.[90] Reading this cartoon in the context of other images, one of its effects might be to elicit a longing for the presence of the protective, repressive state, here absent. Therefore, the cartoon works to secure desire for the state as well as, through the operation of disidentification, the viewer's cooperation with that state. At the same time, we

87. Andrew Hock-Soon Ng, *Dimensions of Monstrosity in Contemporary Narratives: Theory, Psychoanalysis, Postmodernism* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 5.

88. "Monster Culture (Seven Theses)," in *Monster Theory: Reading Culture,* ed. Jeffrey Jerome Cohen (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 19.

89. At times in my analysis, I lapse self-consciously into exclusive use of masculine pronouns. I do so to mark the cartoon's logic, which I think assumes the predominance of a male viewer. However, as I have noted, I am aware of the presence of female spectators as well as the way that class and other categories of identity disturb the assumption of a monolithic male viewer.

90. My reading here builds on Andrew Hock-Soon Ng's insight that the monster is often difficult if not impossible to destroy because "it is within the self" (5).

must remember that, as Cohen formulates monstrosity, "fear of the monster is really a kind of desire." In other words,

> The monster is continually linked to forbidden practices, in order to normalize and to enforce. The monster also attracts. The same creatures who terrify and interdict can evoke potent escapist fantasies; the linking of monstrosity with the forbidden makes the monster all the more appealing as a temporary egress from constraint. . . . Through the body of the monster fantasies of aggression, domination, and inversion are allowed safe expression in a clearly delimited and permanently liminal space.[91]

This monster does not only repel the male viewer, but allows for a safe experience of radical or insurgent sentiments such as those forms of resistance associated with Reform agitation at the moment when this cartoon was published. Resistance, specifically the desire to resist the state as it interpellates one as an obedient, gendered citizen-subject, is a site both of desire and then of containment through ultimate identification with the violence of the state. The male viewer's identification with the state suggests that he is interpellated as a potential remedy to this scene—as a counterpoint of orderly masculinity, as protector of the nation, and as an obedient subject who identifies himself against the Fenian. If the viewer is meant to resist the moment of recognition in the mirrorlike gaze of the Fenian, then he is also invited to correct the scene by fantasizing a variety of remedies. Of course the primary viewers and consumers of such images would be middle-class men and women, not working-class subjects. Thus, the British middle class is asked not only to repudiate the terrorist but to engage in a fantasy concerning newly enfranchised proletarian male citizens; in a move that is familiar from my reading of Thomas Carlyle's writings in chapter 1, this fantasy binds together Britons across the divisions of class through identifications based on race and gender norms but also based on what is posited as a universal investment in the counterterrorist state. If, as Peter Linebaugh has demonstrated, the poor had been criminalized throughout the eighteenth century,[92] their citizenization in 1867 led to a kind of rehabilitation that in part occurred through the figure of the Irish terrorist.

It is significant that the only other subject in the cartoon afforded the luxury of the gaze is the male child in the foreground who watches the Feni-

91. Cohen 17.

92. *The London Hanged: Crime and Civil Society in the Eighteenth Century,* 2nd ed. (London: Verso, 2006).

an as he sits atop his instrument of destruction. The child, however, gazes with innocence and ignorance, a gaze that exists in opposition to the all too knowing gaze of the viewer who understands the impending violence. The spectator is encouraged to see the child as an object requiring rescue, and the scene creates the desire for intervention that parallels the state's interventions against Fenianism. One of the results of the complex psychological operations in this cartoon is therefore the rendering of state counterinsurgency as self-evident and unquestionable. Ideologies of gender and the family serve to posit state violence as necessary and incontestable.

We can also understand the staging of the Fenian in these cartoons as an example of the "colonial uncanny." Freud's notion of the uncanny describes that which is homelike (heimlich) yet unhomelike (note the double play on the domestic as it relates to this image), familiar yet unfamiliar, the return of the repressed that inspires fear and terror.[93] Gail Ching-Liang Low reads the uncanny to explore the "particular dilemma" of colonial identity: "The uncanny in this sense is that which reflects back to the colonial identity another image of itself based on the inversion of its normal structure, a home that turns out not to be a home and a self that turns out to be some other being."[94] The Fenian, represented through racial monstrosity, is a striking example of the colonial uncanny. The familiarity of the scene coexists in a strange and terrifying relation with the intruding figure who is at once foreign yet belonging, secret yet apparent, a site of identification and rejection. Freud also uses the idea of the unsettling doubling of the self to explain the uncanny. Indeed, the Fenian stands as the double to the 'respectable working man' in this scene. At the same time, the uncanny is the "class of frightening things" in which "the frightening element can be shown to be something repressed which *recurs*."[95] The specter of violent protest, so recent a phenomenon of the British working class, here returns in an uncanny form, somehow familiar yet exteriorized and rendered foreign. The male spectator is allowed the space to both identify with but ultimately reject and disown this violence, in the form of the Fenian, as a condition of his citizenship.

Thus far, my reading has focused on what the cartoon invites of the male spectator, but what makes the Fenian and his racial monstrosity so uncanny, so frightening, is the implicit possibility of the failure of the dis-identification that the cartoon invites. This failure might occur because of a viewer who is

93. "The 'Uncanny,'" in *Writings on Art and Literature* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1997), 195–99.

94. *White Skins / Black Masks: Representation and Colonialism* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 114.

95. Freud, "The 'Uncanny'" 217.

sympathetic or Irish or radical, for example. While the spectacle of terror and of the uncanny works to produce fear and its concomitant identifications, there is room in the image for resistant readings and for the danger of errant looking. I will return to these possibilities later in the chapter.

In subsequent cartoons, the Fenian is not just placed outside the boundaries of masculine citizenship, but is repeatedly transformed into a monster, an animal, or some hybrid of both. Such representations mark the emergence of what Luke Gibbons calls "a fully fledged political Gothic" in response to the 1860s "Fenian Fever."[96] In 1869, the first of several cartoons that depict Fenianism as a Frankenstein's monster appeared in the comedic serial the *Tomahawk* (Fig. 3–8). The artist Matt Morgan personifies Fenianism as what Curtis describes as "a human orangutan."[97] While the image is a clear example of the racialization and simianization of Fenians and by extension the Irish (for the monster is called the "Irish Frankenstein" not the "Fenian Frankenstein"), I am interested in the implications of the Frankenstein narrative through which the cartoon is staged. A faceless doctor looks upon his creation, a being that, taken from the context of Shelley's novel, is outside of the boundaries of the human, the ethical, the moral, and the collective into which he is placed. As signified by his deformity and nakedness, the Fenian is no longer just premodern, but prehuman in both his apelike demeanor and his monstrous appearance and affect. Read in relation to Darwinian theory, Irish insurgency is unevolved. The political agency of Fenianism is also dismantled and renarrated. For Fenianism itself is created by the will of the unidentified doctor who gives orders to and deploys a protohuman violence that might otherwise have no direction. Fenianism is thereby once again an expression of a racial propensity to violence, devoid of political rationality, but wielded by a select few with unscrupulous, immoral aims.

The figure of "the Irish Frankenstein" reappeared in 1881 in a picture by the cartoonist John Tenniel (Fig. 3–9). In this case, Tenniel reworks the genre of the Gothic to represent agrarian violence in Ireland, indicated by the papers that read "Captain Moonlight," the allegorical figure who represented various forms of agrarian insurgency.[98] However, this name also connects the figure to Fenianism, both through Fenianism's articulation with such political forms and because of the ways that Fenian leaders took up allegorical representations such as Captain Moonlight and Captain Shook in their own

96. *Gaelic Gothic: Race, Colonization and Irish Culture* (Galway: Arlen House, 2004), 69.

97. L. P. Curtis 48.

98. For a brilliant discussion of these allegorical figures, see Luke Gibbons, "Identity without a Centre," in *Transformations in Irish Culture.*

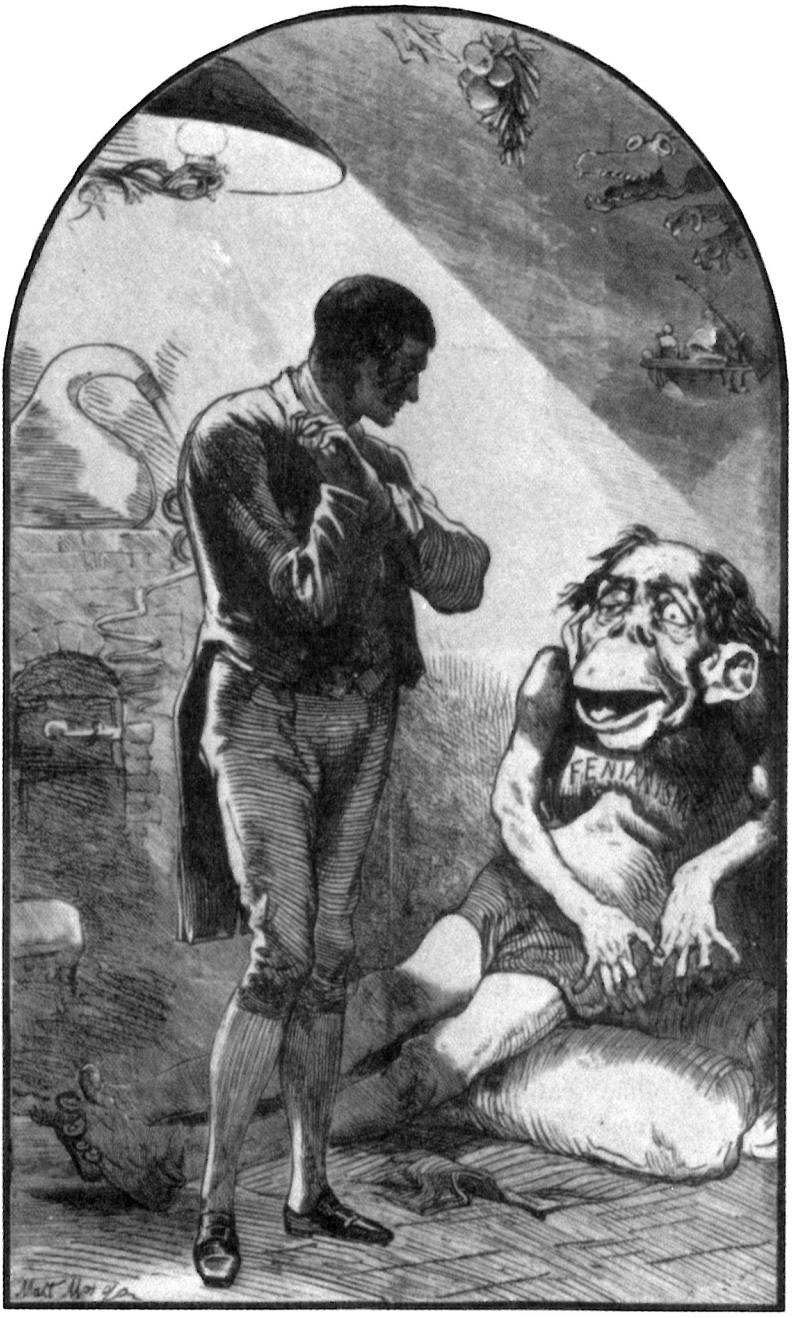

FIGURE 3–8. “The Irish Frankenstein,” 1869

THE IRISH FRANKENSTEIN.

"The baneful and blood-stained Monster * * * yet was it not my Master to the very extent that it was my Creature? * * * Had I not breathed into it my own spirit?" * * * (*Extract from the Works of* C. S. P-RN-LL, M.P.

FIGURE 3–9. "The Irish Frankenstein," 1882

political discourses. In Tenniel's image and according to its caption, the inert apelike figure of Morgan's cartoon has now been animated by Parnell's Home Rule movement. The dagger carried by the monster, which is described as "blood-stained" in the citation from the novel *Frankenstein,* associates him with the recent Phoenix Park assassinations. The figure has been transformed from a reclining ape to a muscular, brutal, and terrifying monster who is a manifestation of the most extreme violence—from his sharpened fangs to his enormous strong arms that grasp both dagger and pistol.

Comedic artists drew on other literary sources to represent Fenianism as bestial or as the expression of a protohuman, inhuman, or monstrous essence. In 1870 Tenniel drew on Shakespeare's *The Tempest* to cast Irish violence as Caliban (Fig. 3–10). In this particular cartoon, the figure of Caliban is identified with all forms of violence in Ireland. Ultramontanism, Fenianism, Ribandism [*sic*], and Orangeism are merged into a representation of a general Irish tendency to political violence in the form of secret societies. The various forms of violence are also implied by the array of weapons that Caliban carries in his holster. The colonial politics of Shakespeare's romance are recognized and deployed by Tenniel, as Caliban's claim to the island works to establish the irrationality of the claim to an independent Ireland. Hibernia, cast as Miranda, is protected from the violent threat of Caliban by the stern figure of Gladstone/Prospero, who holds in his hand a staff labeled "Irish Land Bill." Unlike cartoons that figure state violence as the answer to Fenianism, Gladstone's staff suggests a politics reminiscent of Mill in which land reform might supply the "magic" solution to Irish violent insurgency. While the outcome of the confrontation is not provided, the familiar resolution of the play suggests Caliban's demise.

The immediate threat to Hibernia is very much sexual, as the *Tempest*'s emplotment indicates. The allegorical deployment of the play intimates that "physical force" secret societies will rape Hibernia if their activities are not prevented. The metaphorics of rape once again suggests a form of violence that violates a feminized, helpless Ireland whose only protection might be found through the British state. If other cartoons imagined the Union of Great Britain and Ireland as a marriage or sexual union between John Bull and Erin, "The Irish Tempest" presents the alternative in sexual metaphor—the forcible, gruesome sexual union of the maiden with the inhuman monster who wishes to possess her—an inversion of the gendered orders of domesticity, matrimony, and in this case the paternal through which Union was coded. The cartoon also counters Irish nationalist discourse that figured the Act of Union as forcible colonial rule, without the consent of Irish subjects, that could be likened to a rape or forced marriage.

THE IRISH "TEMPEST."

CALIBAN (RORY OF THE HILLS). "THIS ISLAND'S MINE, BY SYCORAX MY MOTHER, WHICH THOU TAK'ST FROM ME."—*Shakspeare.*

FIGURE 3–10. "The Irish 'Tempest,'" 1870

The Darwinian implications of the apelike Frankenstein and Caliban found fruition in an 1877 *Fun* cartoon that demonstrates the scientific racism that underpinned such popular images of Irish nationalism. That the target is not the radical Fenian movement but the constitutionalist Home Rule movement is all the more striking, for even moderate, statist Irish politics that eschewed violence were expelled from the realm of political rationality. Darwin's theory of the evolution of humankind serves as the narrative frame for the cartoon, as the foregrounded book, "Darwin Development of Species," indicates. The gorilla is marked as the bearer of civilization—holding a pipe, reading a newspaper containing accounts of crime, sitting upright with legs crossed on a pillow. He is juxtaposed with a vision of two Irish nationalists, apes in clothes whose anarchic actions signify their lack of civilized rationality. The slogan above the Irish politicians, "Obstruction For Iver," parodies Irish speech and also signals the absence of any political goal or content in the Home Rule movement besides obstruction. The civilized ape remarks on those who would seem to be his brethren: "Well, if *that's* the development of my species, I'm precious glad I'm still a gorilla." This Darwinian commentary associates the Irish with the gorilla, a prehistoric, unevolved relative of humans, while describing Irish violence as so uncivilized that even the gorilla rejects it.[99] This representation of Fenianism as inhuman and unevolved received expression in numerous other cartoons that figure Irish insurgency as a host of monsters and beasts—an octopuslike "devil-fish," the hybridized "dynamite skunk" that is half mammal and half reptile, a reptilian sea-serpent, a dragon, a gigantic armed pig, and a three-headed monster with satanic features. While the animalistic and brutish forms given to Fenianism vary, in almost all these images the British state is figured in a moment of intervention that grows more and more violent throughout the decades.

The narrative strategies of these monstrous cartoons and of sensational newspaper accounts of Fenianism during the period generate "terror" within the viewer—terror that the Fenian might perpetrate random violence on British subjects, terror that the moral imperative of the law has failed to produce safety within the nation, terror that an inhuman violence has been unleashed upon Ireland and Britain. What these various representations of Fenianism share, I would argue, is a common repertoire of elements that construct the Fenian as a "terrorist," a racialized, gendered figure who "terrorizes" the viewer and the public through supposedly random acts of violence that are ascribed to a total lack of political rationality. The primary ideologemes that we have

99. L. P. Curtis makes a similar point in his reading of this cartoon (xiv).

seen in these images are compressed into the terms "terrorist" and "terrorism" during the mid-Victorian period.

UNRULY SPECTATORS

CONTESTATIONS OVER "TERRORISM"

My account thus far focuses on 'official' discourses of terrorism. Yet even these images and narratives contain space within them for subversion and for resistant readings of the Fenian, the state, and citizenship. If we return to the psychoanalytic frame that I have employed to uncover the question of identification in cartoon art, it becomes clear that these texts hold within them the possibility of their own subversion. Such images assume a particular spectator who can and will participate in his own interpellation within the scene of "terrorism." Obviously, however, viewers might bring to the text a variety of identities, subjectivities, and strategies of reading that make the interpellation of the obedient male subject difficult if not impossible. What happens to female spectators, to working-class radical viewers, to Irish readers sympathetic to the cause of Fenian nationalism?

Laura Mulvey writes of "a world ordered by sexual imbalance [in which] . . . the determining male gaze projects its fantasy onto the female figure" (19) or correspondingly the Fenian who is both monstrous and uncanny. However, in her analysis of film narrative, she also emphasizes that this logic is riven by contradiction, that the illusion of this spectatorship is constantly threatened by its own disruption. Similarly, when writing of the uncanny, Freud stages its failure in certain narratives when an ironic reading intrudes or when the reader identifies with a character in a story who does not have an uncanny feeling toward the uncanny object. The logic of identity formation on which these images rely assumes a stability of identity that is impossible to secure. Projective identification may fail or may result in unanticipated identifications or constitutions of the self. The grotesque may not serve a disruptive function at all. We can easily imagine how this is so in the case of many viewers of the cartoons that I have analyzed. But this logic also reveals itself if we look at a larger sphere of journalistic engagement with the question of "terrorism." This term and all of its ideological elements were contested, reoccupied, and redeployed by Irish and British radicals who in the process challenged a developing idea of the state and its citizenry.

Contemporary with the first uses of "terrorism" to describe Fenianism, there is documentation of Irish nationalists who use the word to describe the

apparatuses and politics of the British state. At the Dublin funeral for the three Fenians executed by the British state for their alleged participation in the Manchester van rescue, nationalist John Martin made a speech in which he lauded the hundreds of thousands who attended:

> [A]ll who are here, and all patriots in Ireland, and all generous and Christian men and women in Ireland, and all the children who are growing up to be men and women in Ireland—all generous and Christian men feel an intense sympathy, an intense love for the memories of *those three Irishmen whom England has murdered in the form of law for the sake of striking terror into our hearts.* (Cheers.) It is idle for me any longer to persist in addressing words—weak words of mine—to you on this occasion. Your presence here to-day, your demeanor all through, and your solemn conduct, *under the terrorism of a hostile Government,* is enough. . . . Your attention here to-day is sufficient, and is a sufficient protest; your orderly behavior, your good behavior all through this wretched weather, your attendance here in such vast numbers, and for such a purpose, *avowedly in the face of the terrorism of the Government* ("hear, hear" and cheers) that is enough.[100]

This speech makes apparent the need to modify and to supplement the narrative of usage as presented in the *Oxford English Dictionary* and in my chapter thus far. The word "terrorism" does indeed undergo a shift in usage and ideological function that roughly corresponds to the movement from historical particularity to an abstracted comparative function, from the description of the use of "terror" by the state to the use of "terror" against the state. However, this shift was in no way sudden or smooth or entirely effective. Rather, John Martin's speech shows how the term "terrorism" served as a site of ideological contestation, of the complex struggle between hegemonic and counterhegemonic ideas of legitimate politics and violence.

While I will explore the historical implications of this argument shortly, for now it is important to note that Martin deploys the ideas of "terror" and "terrorism" to describe the British government in Ireland but more specifically the counterinsurgent tactics of the British state. He renarrates execution as "murder in the form of law," a formulation that dismantles the state's boundaries between criminality and legality, and he identifies official violence's coercive purpose—"to strike terror in our hearts." He works to denaturalize

100. My emphases, the *Daily Express,* December 9, 1867. Sections of this speech are reprinted in the *Times* (London), December 10, 1867, in a column reporting on the procession and suggesting the dangers of such a mass show of support for Fenianism by Irish subjects.

and to delegitimate the violence of the state, positing it as originary rather than simply reactive. The specific address to both "men and women" asserts an idea of national identity over and above the discourse of gender used to describe "terrorism." Simultaneously he subverts the gendered notion of the "protection" of the state. Therefore, the discourse of terrorism, I would argue, was the site for significant contestation concerning the legality and legitimacy of forms of political protest, the legitimacy of state violence, and the limits of the rights of citizenship. Rather than progressively establishing the hegemony of the modern state, of ideas of the terrorist, and of the docile citizen-subject, the emergence of "terrorism" is marked from the beginning by a crisis of hegemony.[101]

Earlier I argued that the Fenian subject serves as the antitype for a construction of British citizenship that is in the process of redefinition after the Reform Acts of 1867–68, and that this new hegemonic idea of the working-class citizen-subject is constructed through the aberrant and transgressive figure of the Fenian. While the mainstream press reflects this mutually constitutive construction, the radical press in Britain tells a very different story. Even a brief look at radical newspapers shows the complicated sites and forms of resistance to this hegemony as well as various critical engagements with a process that was seen to potentially quell working-class agitation through the formation and legitimation of a strong state.

Radical historians of Fenianism such as John Newsinger, Liz Curtis, Paul Rose, and Patrick Quinlivan, have documented quite convincingly the alliances between the Irish Republican Brotherhood and British working-class radical organizations, such as the Reform League, the International Working Men's Association, and eventually the First International.[102] They have also insisted on the importance of the British amnesty movement to pardon Fenian prisoners of the 1860s and 1870s for understanding the intricate connections between British proletarian radicalism and Irish anticolonial nationalism during this period. Following this significant work, I want to provide a few examples of how the idea of "terror" served as a site of ideological contestation, how it was reworked and redeployed, and how ultimately the radical commitment to undoing the occlusion of "terrorism of the Government," in the words of John Martin, is central to this process. My methodology here is not historiographical, and therefore I do not attempt to document comprehensively the archive of writings on Fenianism in British radical texts. Rather,

101. Stuart Hall introduced this phrase in *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State, and Law and Order,* ed. Stuart Hall et al. (London: Macmillan, 1978).

102. See Newsinger; Liz Curtis; Quinlivan and Rose.

I have chosen several select examples from a variety of texts, and will also read some of the events and demonstrations of the amnesty movement as texts that engage with and challenge the encroaching hegemony of the modern state, its violent counterinsurgency, and its ideal of citizenship.

While the record of the British mainstream media in the decades of Fenianism is remarkably consistent, there is an abundance of writings in radical newspapers that resist the construction of Fenianism that was saturating public discourse. Radicals seized upon the idea of "Terror" and attempted to rework and subvert it. For example, writing of the Manchester Martyrs about to be executed in 1867, John Bright, radical M.P., reversed the concept of terror, writing of the Tories' commitment to death for the prisoners: "I fear the Tories know little mercy, terror is their only specific."[103] Numerous working-class radical newspapers such as the *Beehive* argued that the source of Fenianism was colonial injustice in Ireland, not a racial propensity to violence; the criminality of Fenianism was challenged on the grounds that it was a political not a criminal movement, and many editorials called for the creation of the category "political prisoner" to differentiate political crimes from other forms of criminality.[104]

On the day after the execution of the Manchester "martyrs," James Finlen, a former Chartist and radical agitator, addressed a crowd of over 25,000 demonstrators, and challenged the sensational representation of Fenian violence: "the blood so wantonly and unnecessarily shed [in these executions] would tend to cement and consolidate the sympathies and hearts of English, Irish, and Scotch in one hold and invincible bond, dedicated to the regeneration of these islands, afflicted as they were by class despotism, dishonour and class slavery."[105] The violence of the state is represented as random and unnecessary, an argument that works against its legitimation. "Bloodshed" is no longer the result of Fenianism but of the state. The representation of those who engaged in the Manchester van rescue as martyrs and victims works against their dehumanization and monstrousness in the mainstream press. In a recognition of the nature of this state violence, John Denvir, a leader in the IRB, wrote, "Their [the martyrs'] DEATH, which was intended to strike terror into the heart of Ireland, was in truth the LIFE of Irish freedom."[106] Countering ideas of terrorism, Denvir takes apart the logic of counterterror,

103. Quinlivan and Rose 66.

104. Ibid. 66–69.

105. Cited in Newsinger 63.

106. *The Irish in Britain: from the earliest times to the fall and death of Parnell* (London: Kegan Paul, 1892), 240. I first came upon this quote in Liz Curtis 75.

suggesting that such terror is not in fact reactionary but foundational to the British state's apparatuses of colonial control. We can find similar reversals of the idea of "terrorism" and of the racial discourse that underpins it throughout the pages of the *Nation* newspaper in Ireland during the 1860s and 1870s.[107]

Radical critique also focused on the legal proceedings by which Fenians were arrested and prosecuted, attempting to reveal the fictive basis of a claim to uphold law, order, and public safety as one that operated through the transgression of legal structures and rights that were guaranteed to British subjects. Denvir wrote of the night of the Manchester rescue as "a reign of terror . . . for the Irish in Manchester." The radical weekly *Reynolds's Newspaper* published an article that articulated what became a common radical critique of the process by which the Manchester defendants were prosecuted:

> Because, in an isolated attempt at the rescue of two men suspected of Fenianism, a policeman happened to be killed, a violent trembling seized the governing classes, and a yell of vengeance issued from every organ of the aristocratic plunderers of the English working classes. Wholesale and indiscriminate arrests were made. Before a particle of evidence had been formally obtained against the prisoners, their guilt was assumed, and their execution demanded.[108]

Activists Charles Bradlaugh and Annie Besant wrote similarly in the radical press of the corrupt proceedings at the trial.[109] Such writings insist that British counterinsurgency against Fenianism took illegal forms that breached the contract between state and subject guaranteeing such rights as due process of law. Thus, the supposed criminality, illegality, and irrationality of Fenianism were reflected back on the state, which justified its repression of the movement by any means necessary.

Working-class agitation also focused on legal protocols of the prosecution of the Fenians and more specifically on the sentence of execution as the favored punishment for such insurgency. Enormous rallies, vigils, and demonstrations in favor of amnesty for Fenians occurred through the 1860s and 1870s.[110] The main focus of these amnesty movements was the circumvention of the law in the prosecution of Fenian prisoners and a critique of

107. In the *Nation* newspaper in Ireland, in 1857, the year before the IRB was founded, there are examples of nationalist articles in which the British state's violence against the Sepoy soldiers and Indian people who rebelled is described as "terrorism."

108. Cited in Liz Curtis 73.

109. Quinlivan and Rose 68–69.

110. See Paul Rose passim.

capital punishment, the most extreme violence of the state, as a punishment for political agitation. Such demonstrations can be read as agitation against the use of terror by the state and against the staging of the political insurgent's body as spectacle that might produce obedient subjects before the law. At the same time, such radical politics attempted to contest what counts as legitimate politics and to insist upon the legitimacy of protest, insurgency, and anticolonialism within the newly configured British nation-state. Such historical examples reveal profound contestation over the ideas of the state and of "terror" implicit in counterinsurgent ideology. I will now turn to another archive—the writings of Fenians themselves—to look at alternative representations of Fenianism and also at theorizations of nation and state emerging from Ireland in the last decades of the nineteenth century.

CHAPTER 4

"A SOMEWHAT IRISH WAY OF WRITING"

The Genre of Fenian Recollections and Postcolonial Critique

In 1907 James Joyce began to write a series of three articles on various incarnations of Irish nationalism and on the state of contemporary Irish politics. While these articles, written in Italian and published in Trieste, focus largely on the Home Rule movement, Joyce inaugurated the series with a consideration of the Fenian movement in Ireland. "Fenianism: The Last Fenian" was written on the occasion of the death of John O'Leary, one of the leaders of the Irish Republican Brotherhood throughout the 1860s and the founding editor of the Fenian newspaper, the *Irish People*. Joyce identifies O'Leary as "the last actor in the turbid drama of Fenianism," "a figure from a world which has disappeared."[1] By the end of the essay, Joyce offers him up as a melancholic apparition from the past, one who haunts a present to which he no longer belongs. Of O'Leary's last days in Dublin, he writes:

> He would often be seen walking along the river, an old man dressed in light colored clothes, with a shock of very white hair hanging down to his shoulders, almost bent in two from old age and suffering. He would stop in front of the gloomy shops of the old book dealers, and having made some purchase, would return along the river. Aside from this, he had little reason to be happy.

1. In this chapter, I cite the following edition of "Fenianism: The Last Fenian," in *The Critical Writings,* ed. Ellsworth Mason and Richard Ellmann (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1959), 188 and 191. Henceforth this edition will be cited parenthetically as *CW*.

> His plots had gone up in smoke, his friends had died, and in his own native land, very few knew who he was and what he had done. (*CW* 191–92)

This passage represents O'Leary using an iconography of ghostliness—the whiteness of his hair and clothes, his gloomy haunting of the waterfront, his dislocation to the point of otherworldliness. He would "often be seen" despite the fact that "very few knew" him; thus Joyce insists that he can only haunt rather than actively participate in the world of early-twentieth-century Dublin. Even before his death, he is a shade, relegated to the margins of existence by political irrelevance and national forgetting that have broken him.

As Richard Ellman and Ellsworth Mason observe in their notes to the essay, this passage is all the more striking because it is a deliberate *mis*representation of O'Leary's final years, one that would have surprised O'Leary, who, although disillusioned, remained quite politically involved until the end of his life. For example, as they note, O'Leary had a profound impact on the Irish Literary Revival (*CW* 192), in particular W. B. Yeats, with whom he corresponded and who memorialized him in the poem "September 1913," writing famously: "Romantic Ireland's dead and gone; / it's with O'Leary in the grave." Throughout his later years, O'Leary remained active in radical nationalist circles in Dublin and also headed Irish support of the Boer cause during the Anglo–Boer War. Therefore, Joyce's decision to relegate O'Leary to obsolescence is surely strategic and makes, I would argue, a very particular point about the status of Fenianism in early-twentieth-century Britain and Ireland. For as the final sentence of the passage suggests, what renders O'Leary such a ghostly presence is not his personal irrelevance but the death of Fenianism in the political and historical consciousness of Ireland. While O'Leary continued to stand as an important political and literary influence on cultural and radical nationalists, he was subject simultaneously to a larger process of collective amnesia concerning the history of Fenianism.

Indeed, Joyce's essay provides a retrospective examination of a particular moment in the forgotten history of Fenianism, what Joyce calls "the Fenianism of '67"—what we might describe as early Fenianism or radical Fenianism—in order to identify exactly what political potentialities and insurgent formations were disappearing from Ireland's political landscape in the first decade of the twentieth century. For Joyce, O'Leary, as the "Last Fenian," becomes the synecdoche for radical Fenianism itself. O'Leary's political death, which occurs before his literal passing, signifies the larger demise of the Fenian movement, the end of which, Joyce contends, has significant consequences for the Irish political scene in 1907 as well as, we shall see, the process of decolonization.

In the passage above, Joyce refuses to bury O'Leary or the brand of Fenianism that he embodies; his gothic representation of the spectral last Fenian suggests a haunting of Irish politics by a particular past. O'Leary joins the more familiar shade of Parnell as another phantom whose ghostly presence troubles Irish nationalism and separatism.

Over what exactly is Joyce grieving, and why does he turn to Fenianism and specifically O'Leary to represent a loss that haunts Irish politics? Joyce's essay elucidates his own relationship to anticolonial nationalism and also his view of the process of decolonization that Ireland faced at this time. In addition, however, Joyce offers a very complex theorization of the politics of mourning in Irish society. Loss and failure become the essay's central problematics. Engagement with these questions holds the key to a productive analysis of a decolonizing Ireland, and the Joycean politics of loss that emerges makes possible both a sharp critique of dominant forms of mainstream Irish nationalism and an attempt to recuperate political possibilities that have been destroyed by it. In other words, although the essay is structured by death, certain potentialities persist through haunting, and by insisting on their presence in however attenuated a form, Joyce holds out the possibility of their reanimation. Such concerns in Joyce's essay as well as his contemporaneous writing in 1907 mirror the forms and concerns of actual Fenian writings from the late Victorian period. I argue that we can read Joyce's work on Fenianism and Home Rule and the autobiographical writings of many Fenians in the late nineteenth century as anticipating some of the central concerns of postcolonial critique and in particular the Subaltern Studies collective. I want to suggest that we read these writings on Fenianism as a form of theory in and of itself, for they offer a larger framework for considering the problem of European modernity—particularly in the form of statist nationalism—for anticolonial struggle and for the process of decolonization.

As I've already noted, while John O'Leary serves as the framing figure of "Fenianism: The Last Fenian," the article's primary subject is a particular strand of the complex political formation called Fenianism. Luke Gibbons suggests that for Joyce, "Irish nationalism is characterised by 'a double struggle'—the anti-imperial struggle, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, an internal struggle, 'perhaps no less bitter,' between constitutional nationalism and a dissident, insurrectionary tradition beginning with the Whiteboys and passing through to the Fenian (IRB) movement."[2] Indeed, in defining

2. "Identity without a Centre," in *Transformations in Irish Culture* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1996), 146.

his object of inquiry, Joyce divides Fenianism from constitutional or statist nationalism. But he also makes a further distinction between early Fenianism—the specific historical designation he provides is "the Fenianism of '67"—and "the new Fenians [who] are joined in a party which is called Sinn Fein." The Fenianism in which Joyce is interested has been lost to the newer incarnation that shares its name but, as we will see, has significantly altered political content and goals. Thus, Joyce's retrospection is quite historically specific rather than expressing a generalized nostalgia. He turns his attention to early Fenianism or what I call radical Fenianism, the IRB of the 1860s, because it has been abandoned in favor of newer incarnations of what it means to be a Fenian. As Seamus Deane reminds us, later Fenianism, on the cusp of succeeding in its goal of Irish independence, was marked by "a brand of nationalism that was far more conservative and catholic, far less republican, than it had originally conceived."[3] Joyce turns to a specific moment in the past before radical Fenianism had given way to the dominance of statist, cultural, Celticist, and Catholic nationalism. He does not simply reject Sinn Fein; for example, he praises some of its economic projects and supports their ultimate goal, but he argues that they seem less effective as they have moved away from "the Fenianism of '67," less comprehensive and certainly less radical. He acknowledges Sinn Fein's limitations and suggests that the organization is haunted by a loss that parallels the disappearance of Parnellism.[4] Hence, in the series of essays that "The Last Fenian" inaugurates, Joyce identifies a larger process of the vanishing of viable political alternatives to a hegemonic mainstream nationalist vision that he sees as a reproduction of British political modernity.[5]

What is this radical Fenianism that Joyce turns his attention to, and why does he wish it to haunt Ireland at this particular moment? As I have argued in chapter 2, "the Fenianism of '67" refers to a complex matrix of political formations and organizations, all of which identified themselves as part of a larger anticolonial nationalist and separatist movement in Ireland and around the world. Founded in 1858 by James Stephens and John O'Mahoney, Fenianism was composed of two main branches, the Irish Republican Brotherhood in Ireland and the Fenian Brotherhood in the United States. A mass movement composed primarily of the working, agricultural, and artisan classes

3. *The Field Day Anthology of Irish Literature,* vol. 2 (Derry: Field Day, 1991), 211.

4. See "Home Rule Comes of Age," in *CW* 193–96, and "The Home Rule Comet," in *CW* 209–13.

5. "The Home Rule Comet," in *CW* 212–13.

in Ireland,[6] Fenians engaged in numerous forms of political action. Indeed, Fenianism combined various, seemingly opposed forms of anticolonial strategy: the revolutionary advocation of 'physical force' and preparation for militarized resistance; nonviolent forms of activism; republican gestures such as the creation of an Irish currency; the publication of nationalist writing; and serious engagement with other radical movements, including anticolonial insurgents throughout the British Empire. Marx describes the movement as possessing a variety of characteristics that distinguished it from previous forms of Irish anticolonialism and nationalism: it was lower-class, even socialist, in its composition; it was not Catholic but secular; it did not have a representative in the British Parliament; and it possessed multiple fields of action (Ireland, America, England, and other sites throughout the Empire) and could therefore be described as a global or internationalist movement.[7]

Joyce was interested in radical Fenianism for many of the same reasons as Marx. He recounts with admiration Fenianism's ability to marshal mass support in Ireland. He also describes in detail the secret, oath-bound movement's cellular structure, a mode of organization derived from French and Italian revolutionary societies as well as Irish agrarian subaltern movements: "[T]he country was organized into circles composed of a Sergeant and twenty five men," he writes, "a vast and intricate net, whose threads were in Stephens' hands. At the same time, the American Fenians were organized in the same way, and the two movements worked in concert. Among the Fenians there were many soldiers in the English Army, police spies, prison guards, and jailers. Everything seemed to go well, and the Republic was on the point of being established" (*CW* 189). He identifies this radically decentralized, opaque cell structure as the ideal defense against informers and betrayal, a particular obsession of Joyce in his political writings and the primary tactics used by the British state in its transforming strategies of counterinsurgency.

While he does not discuss other political possibilities within early Fenianism explicitly, we must also remember that Fenianism was connected to other radical politics such as plans of socialist land distribution and radical visions of the Irish nation that might organize political power in ways other

6. For discussion and documentation of the social composition of the IRB, see John Newsinger, *Fenianism in Mid-Victorian Britain* (London: Pluto, 1994), 29. His assessment is supported by historians such as Quinlivan and Rose, Tom Garvin, and Liz Curtis. In addition, Desmond Ryan cites a letter from James Stephens, one of the founders of the IRB, in which he describes the organization as one which found its support primarily from "laborers and tradesmen . . . and the sons of peasants." *The Fenian Chief: A Biography of James Stephens* (Dublin: M. H. Gill, 1967), 80.

7. "Notes for an Undelivered Speech on Ireland" (1867), in Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Ireland and the Irish Question* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1971), 134.

than through the apparatuses of the modern nation-state. Joyce also lauds Fenianism's repudiation of state politics, a political stance that he associates with a continuum of radical insurgency in Ireland: "This party under different names: 'White Boys,' 'Men of 98,' 'United Irishmen,' 'Invincibles,' 'Fenians,' has always refused to be connected with either the English political parties or the Nationalist parliamentarians. They maintain (and in this assertion history fully supports them) that any concessions that have been granted to Ireland, England has granted unwillingly, and as it is usually put, at the point of a bayonet" (*CW* 188). Espousing guerilla warfare as a primary tactic, the IRB refused engagement with parliamentary activism or other legal channels of the British state, a politics associated with constitutional nationalisms. For Joyce, this rejection of engagement with the state constitutes a recognition of the futility of parliamentarianism in the effort to achieve a truly independent Ireland. Joyce would express his frustration with these futile measures in the essays on Home Rule published not long after "The Last Fenian." For example, consider his critique of Liberalism and vaticanism as the most powerful weapons that England can use against Ireland and his assertion of the bankruptcy of parliamentary politics in "Home Rule Comes of Age" (1907).

As should be clear, much of Joyce's explication of radical Fenianism focuses on the movement's relationship to the state form. As I have argued in chapter 2, what distinguishes Fenianism from other forms of Irish anticolonialism and nationalism is that it unified some statist structures of nationalism with those that we might identify as a nationalism against the state, to use David Lloyd's productive formulation.[8] (This combination of tactics parallels Parnell, who successfully combined constitutional methods and a politics based on physical force.) This structure allowed the IRB of the 1860s to be highly organized but simultaneously decentered, to reach much of the population of Ireland with its political message while remaining opaque to the British authorities, and to be highly successful without being co-opted by the forms of the imperial state.

There are other attributes of radical Fenianism that, while not mentioned by Joyce in this essay, would make the political movement of obvious interest to him when we consider his other political commentary. For example, the IRB had an abiding commitment to the secularization of Irish politics, to antisectarianism, and to a critique of institutionality that extended from the state form to the Catholic Church. Raising the banner of "no priests in poli-

8. Lloyd, "Nationalisms against the State," in *Ireland after History* (South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1999), 19–36.

tics," Fenianism found itself in a protracted power struggle with the Church, one that resulted in the Church's complicity with British authorities in surveillance as they joined forces to censor Fenian publications.[9] In addition, as I have already described, Fenianism maintained a complex relationship to the identity politics that had emerged from Irish nationalist movements earlier in the nineteenth century, often positing an idea of "Irishness" that was radically heterogeneous and avoided reliance on a simple racial logic. Therefore, I would argue that Joyce distinguished Fenianism from mainstream or bourgeois Irish nationalism on many counts and that, in tracing Joyce's relationship to the larger formation "anticolonialism," we need to avoid an easy conflation of Fenianism with other forms of nationalism.[10]

Rather, Fenianism's relationship to and vision of modernity is as vexed and complicated as Joyce's, and in fact there are parallels between the two. Fenianism emerged out of the conditions of modernity, was shaped by them and drew on them, but also in its practices and politics critiqued those aspects of modernity and modernization that foreclosed the possibilities of human freedom. Joe Cleary has elegantly described recent understandings of modernity as assuming that "every present is non-synchronous, a coeval mix of radically disjunct temporalities" and "that all our 'nows' (whether at the level of the individual or collective subject) represent a continuous process of anticipated futures and reconstructed pasts lived in traumatic relay with each other."[11] This formulation could easily describe either Joyce's writing or radical Fenianism's politics. In order to understand how this is, I now turn to the theorization of loss at work in Joyce's essay and will excavate the relationship between political past, present, and future that it suggests.

On first reading, "The Last Fenian" article seems to have a rather straightforward relationship to loss. We could characterize the text as a lament or as a nostalgic elegy for lost Fenianism. But by the end of the essay, immediately following his image of the ghostly O'Leary, Joyce turns his acerbic wit toward the Irish propensity for funerary mourning: "Now that he is dead, his countrymen will escort him to his tomb with great pomp. Because the Irish, even though they break the hearts of those who sacrifice their lives for their native

9. For a historical account of the Church's condemnation of Fenianism, see Donal MacCartney, "The Church and Fenianism," in *Fenians and Fenianism: Centenary Essays,* ed. Maurice Harmon (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1970), 13–27; and the comprehensive account provided in Oliver P. Rafferty, *The Church, the State, and the Fenian Threat, 1861–75* (London: Macmillan, 1999).

10. This tendency to conflate Fenianism with nationalism is exhibited in Vincent Cheng's otherwise valuable study *Joyce, Race, and Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

11. "Introduction: Ireland and Modernity," in *The Cambridge Companion to Irish Culture,* ed. Joe Cleary and Claire Connolly (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 19.

land, never fail to show great respect for the dead" (*CW* 192). Joyce ironizes and thereby critiques the central role of mourning in early-twentieth-century Irish politics. Joyce takes apart the nationalist rite of the hero's funeral and its attendant ideal of heroic sacrifice. He points out the hypocrisy of mourning that expresses a respect for the dead that is not shown to the living and that rushes to bury the past rather than learning from it. More importantly, Joyce sets up a taxonomy of *types* of mourning, one that parallels his stark differentiation between forms of nationalism.

When trying to understand Joyce's analysis of loss and mourning in Ireland, Freud's theorization of mourning and melancholia, written a decade after the essay on Fenianism, holds great explanatory power. Freud defines mourning and melancholia as two psychic responses to loss, two distinct processes of grieving, closely related but different in important ways. In Freud's schema, mourning consists of the work of withdrawing attachment from a lost object, the classic example being the death of a loved one. While this work usually involves struggle and pain, "the normal outcome is that deference for reality gains the day"; in other words, "the ego becomes free [from the loss] and uninhibited again."[12] Mourning is thus constituted by withdrawal and detachment. Opposed to mourning, Freud posits melancholia, which he identifies as a pathological relation to the lost object, whereby attachment is not withdrawn but rather the ego incorporates the lost object, refuses to let go, and eventually "establish[es] an identification . . . with the abandoned object" (170). A series of strong cathexes and anti-cathexes serves to allow the object to persist in the ego of the melancholic. Fundamentally, melancholia can be described as the refusal of substitution.

Notably, Freud's model of mourning and melancholia allows that the psychic loss that initiates either process need not be what we might call a personal or intimate loss. Freud specifies that "Mourning is regularly the reaction to the loss of a loved person, or to the loss of some abstraction which has taken the place of one, such as fatherland, liberty, an ideal and so on" and that melancholia is "an effect of the same influences" (164). This particularly flexible definition of loss has opened up the Freudian concept of melancholia to disciplines beyond psychology. For example, Paul Gilroy has theorized a condition that he calls "postcolonial melancholia": his diagnosis of what he sees as Britain's neurotic, even pathological response to the trauma of the loss of Empire.[13] Preceding Gilroy's work, scholarship in Asian-American

12. "Mourning and Melancholia" (1917), in *General Psychological Theory* (New York: Touchstone Books, 1963), 166.

13. Paul Gilroy, *Postcolonial Melancholia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005).

Studies, Postcolonial Studies, and Critical Race Theory has turned to Freud's understanding of melancholia, insisting that this psychic condition can be employed to understand what Anne Cheng has called the "elaborate identificatory system based on psychical and social consumption-and-denial" upon which racial power rests.[14] Ranjana Khanna has even posited critical melancholy as the foundation of a critique of "colonialism and its aftermath: the imperium of neocolonial late capitalism."[15]

Clearly, scholars such as Cheng, Khanna, and David Eng[16] read Freudian melancholia against the grain. They have argued that melancholia need not be pathologized but may describe a psychic strategy of survival and resistance in the face of traumatic and pathological loss, for example, that produced by racism or colonialism. Such work is in keeping with Frantz Fanon's assertion in *The Wretched of the Earth* that "Pathology is considered as a means whereby the organism responds to, in other words adapts itself to, the conflict it is faced with, the disorder being at the same time a symptom and a cure."[17] In other words, those psychic processes deemed pathological may, in the context of traumatic power relations such as colonialism or institutionalized racism, be processes and strategies by which subjects call attention to the pathological conditions of power that act upon them; they can refuse what might be the false foreclosure of loss or trauma demanded by mourning, and may forge new kinds of agency for themselves.[18]

Using psychoanalysis as a lens through which to consider Joyce's complex politics of loss, it seems that he offers a similar undoing of Freud's designation of mourning as normative and melancholia as pathological. His ironic commentary on the rite of the public funeral, I would argue, rejects popular rituals of mourning as hypocritical but also as pathological in that they consign the lost object, here Fenianism, to the past too easily. The public funeral, which became a centerpiece of mainstream Irish nationalism in the second half of

14. Anne Cheng, *The Melancholy of Race: Psychoanalysis, Assimilation, and Hidden Grief* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 11.

15. Ranjana Khanna, *Dark Continents: Psychoanalysis and Colonialism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003), 23.

16. See David L. Eng and David Kazanjian, eds., "Introduction: Mourning Remains," and David L. Eng and Shinhee Han, "Dialogue on Racial Melancholia," in *Loss* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2003).

17. Trans. Constance Farrington (New York: Grove, 1963), 290.

18. In her study of the novel and its relation to the emergence of the modern individual subject, Nancy Armstrong formulates melancholia in a resonant way: "In contrast with the mourner, the confirmed melancholic refuses to let go of the bad object and sustains himself by waging war against objectifications of that which the culture requires him to renounce." *How Novels Think: The Limits of Individualism from 1719–1900* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 77.

the nineteenth century, enacts false closure, a sort of amnesia that renders the past dead rather than an active presence in constituting the present and the future. According to Joyce, by "escort[ing] the dead to their tombs," the Irish seal off the past from existence as a more productive and living force in Irish politics, replaced by empty romanticization, valorization, and sentiment, and then finally forgotten.

Joyce's rejection of ritualized and institutionalized forms of mourning emerges from a particular moment in Irish history that I would describe as a crisis concerning impending decolonization. It is no accident that Joyce wrote his essay on Fenianism alongside a searing critique of the Home Rule movement, "Home Rule Comes of Age," published just two months later. As I've already observed, by 1907 radical insurrectionary nationalism and its political imaginary had been in many ways subordinated to mainstream parliamentary nationalism. As the possibility of an independent Ireland and some form of decolonization seemed imminent, contestations over colonial memory arose. Once Home Rule politics gained dominance in the public sphere in Ireland, new discourses that repressed colonial trauma came to the fore. Critiques of Union as a form of colonial domination were displaced by the political rhetoric of the "union of the hearts." This phrase emerged from Gladstonian Home Rule politics; it appeared in 1886 with the drafting of the first Home Rule Bill in the British Parliament. The phrase, often repeated by Gladstone, refigured the term "Union," dislodging it from its most enduring nineteenth-century discourses that began with the "Act of Union" and continued through its various deployments within Unionist and separatist politics. The "union of hearts" suggested that the Union of the past was now replaced by the union of Irish and English will and sentiment, and that a solution to the longstanding Irish question could be discovered and implemented. During the late 1880s and early 1890s, many of the various, often conflicting groups of Irish nationalists were won over, at least to some degree, by this idea of the union of hearts. This was evident in the number of nationalists, formerly advocates of physical force and insurrection only, who began to support or to participate in parliamentary politics and to back the Gladstonian notion of Home Rule, even if it offered a very limited form of local autonomy that wrested little power from the hands of the British state. Even some of the most radical nationalists, such as John Devoy and other early Fenians, seemed to agree that constitutional agitation could coexist as part of a two-pronged approach that coupled legal measures with violent resistance. John O'Leary was one of the few Fenians of '67 who viewed such a project as impossible.

Joyce suggests that, in these conditions when "Ireland now wishes to make common cause with British democracy" (*CW* 212), mourning serves the interests of these various institutions of power to which Irish anticolonial politics had acquiesced—the British state, the imagined Irish state that many hoped would soon come into being, and the Catholic Church. Therefore, as an alternative to hegemonic mourning, he offers melancholia, the refusal to end cathection or attachment to that which is inassimilable to Home Rule politics. Joyce's entire essay—from its ghostly representation of O'Leary to its paradoxical lament for a brand of radical Fenianism that has disappeared but is in fact revived as a haunting political presence by the essay itself—can be read as an expression of insistent and resistant melancholia. Anne Cheng reminds us that "[t]he melancholic ego is a haunted ego . . . formed and fortified by a spectral drama"[19]; that understanding history through melancholia "teaches us to be attentive to the disjunctive and retroactive hauntedness of history . . . haunted history alerts us to *context*. And it is from within this attention to contexts that we might be able to reenvision a politics attuned to the reality of grief in all its material and immaterial evidence."[20] Joyce's turn to melancholy performs just this kind of work. Rather than standing as pathology, melancholia offers a strategy whereby history's hauntedness can be revealed, and past potentialities such as radical Fenianism might be incorporated or devoured, to use Freud's term, back into Ireland's present through identification.

My reading does not seek to pathologize Joyce as a melancholic or to suggest that Joyce advocates a collective melancholic condition as a solution to the problems facing Irish politics at the beginning of the twentieth century. Instead, melancholia becomes a textual and political strategy by which Joyce can both diagnose and counter a premature process of mourning. It is also a means whereby shards of a radical past can be preserved in the face of Home Rule or the victory of constitutional and Celticist nationalism; in other words, they might continue to haunt the present. Melancholia holds out the possibility that that which has been lost is not relinquished but remains and that it might be revivified.

Of course Joyce recognized the risks of persistent melancholia—that it might calcify into the kind of paralysis that we witness in many of the stories in *Dubliners*. But, in "The Last Fenian," Joyce imagines that a temporary or transitory melancholia can be productive. For him, melancholy seems to hold

19. Anne Cheng 8.
20. Ibid. 28.

out the possibility of allowing for something like what Kevin Whelan calls radical memory: the deploying of "the past in a radical way to challenge the present and reshape the future, to restore into possibility historical moments that had been blocked or unfulfilled earlier." Whelan suggests that radical memory "opens a space for a counterpoint history," that it is "rememorative, seeking to write back in that which had been erased or submerged" at the same time that it "must continue to acknowledge the irredeemable losses that lie at the core of historical injustice."[21] Notably, Whelan sets radical memory against a melancholia that he identifies as obsessive and disabling. However, I would argue that Joyce's melancholic reconsideration of Fenianism accomplishes something like what radical memory achieves—it allows for the persistence of loss and also invites that loss to haunt Irish consciousness with potentialities from the past. Joyce's melancholic politics also resonates with Ranjana Khanna's theorization of colonial melancholy. Khanna identifies the "loss of ideal" to which Freud gestures suggestively as "the right of subjecthood and the right not to be exploited."[22] She also identifies revolutionary violence as a form of melancholia in response to the failure of such ideals promised by the Liberal humanism of Europe. Joyce's figuration of melancholy identifies the loss of the possibility of fulfilling such ideals in the trajectory of Irish decolonization in 1907. As anticolonial nationalism invested itself in the forms of British modernity, particularly the modern state form, it foreclosed the possibility of imagining radical alternative political possibilities for the Irish subject and for the Irish people. In other words, as Khanna suggests, Joyce deploys melancholy as a way to critique the intimate relation between colonialist modernity and the postcolonial Irish state coming into being during the process of decolonization. What is lost, that which haunts a decolonizing Ireland, are the radical potentialities embodied in the Fenianism of '67.

My reading of the politics of loss in Joyce's essay on Fenianism begs an important basic question—why does Joyce figure this melancholia and radical memory through John O'Leary in particular? Despite Joyce's efforts to resuscitate O'Leary as a key political figure and despite his influence on and appearance in the poetry of William Butler Yeats, John O'Leary is a largely forgotten literary and political figure of nineteenth-century Ireland. Yet there are many aspects of O'Leary's life, political career, and writing that make

21. "The Cultural Effects of the Famine," in *The Cambridge Companion to Irish Culture,* ed. Clare Carroll and Patricia King (Cork: Cork University Press, 2003), 151–52.

22. *Dark Continents* 23.

him a particularly suitable emblem for radical Fenianism and also make him a fascinating figure for Joyce. To explore why Joyce selects O'Leary to stand as "the last Fenian," I will trace a literary and political genealogy of melancholy (on the border between the colonial and postcolonial) that leads us to another archive of Irish writing, the genre of Fenian recollection. This genre of the late nineteenth century, I argue, provides the melancholic frame that we find in "The Last Fenian" and, more importantly, theorizes and critiques anticolonial struggle's capture of the state and claim to speak for the nation through political representation and through official history. In doing so, Fenian recollection posits a politics of loss and haunting, of complex memory, that serves to complicate a dominant narrative of decolonization. The genre, therefore, rejects many of the forms of logic concerning nation, state, and history that I have explored in earlier chapters on British writing on Fenianism.

This writing and its politics thus anticipate some of the central concerns of postcolonial theory, and in fact could be described as an early example of postcolonialism, a kind of proleptic critique that helps us to better understand the literary and political interventions into specific historical moments that precede the work in the academy that has come to occupy the place of "postcoloniality." Such critique requires not just strategic melancholy or a complication of modernity, nation, and state, but new kinds of writings, the writing of radical memory in relation to the literary and the historical. Indeed, in the process, the very categories of history and literature are challenged and sometimes undone. Of these Fenian recollections, O'Leary's text, *Recollections of Fenians and Fenianism,* stands as the most innovative in terms of narrative form as well as the political and material stakes that underpin these often strange, seemingly anomalous formal innovations. O'Leary's *Recollections* writes the politics of melancholia and memory through a fragmented narrative that refuses the coherence provided by the autobiographical subject, the national/nationalist subject, or the subject of history. Its seeming incoherence and its experimentation stand as a textual manifestation of Fenianism's political forms. This mode of writing connects the text to both the subaltern and the colonial modernist. Therefore, Joyce's melancholic meditation on Irish decolonization is connected clearly to a body of writing that recognizes that there are always sites of excess—political, historical, cultural, and in the people—over and above the nation-state that claims to represent the totality. The genre of Fenian recollection employs a complex framework of melancholia and memory in order to explore the contradictions and complexities of history/

historicism[23] (specifically the haunted nature of official history) and of the nation-state during the early phases of decolonization in Ireland. I argue that Joyce and the Fenian writers such as O'Leary who precede him write in the space of a representational crisis (both textual and political representation) inaugurated by the demands of decolonization. My work in this chapter thereby provides a different literary and political history of Irish modernism, one that situates the work of Joyce, for example, in relation to nineteenth-century Irish political writing that grapples with the problems of representation under the imperial and imagined postcolonial state. I seek to trace an alternative genealogy of Irish literature in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Once the vicissitudes of decolonization and the disappearance of radical possibilities are recognized as key problematics, we can understand the relationship between form and politics in colonial and postcolonial writing differently.

THE GENRE OF FENIAN RECOLLECTION

In Ireland, the United States, and England, the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries marked the appearance of numerous books and newspaper serializations about Fenianism written by members of various Fenian organizations. I call this archive the genre of Fenian recollections. John O'Leary's *Recollections of Fenians and Fenianism* (1896), Joseph Denieffe's *A Personal Narrative of the Irish Republican Brotherhood* (1904), John Devoy's *Recollections of an Irish Rebel* (1929), Richard Pigott's *Personal Recollections of an Irish National Journalist* (1882), Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa's *Recollections* (1898) and *My Years in English Jails* (1882), James J. O'Kelly's *The Dawn of Fenianism: Some Reminiscences of a Great National Movement* (1899) and Mark Ryan's *Fenian Memories* (1949)—these volumes, to name just a few, stand as the most popular of the numerous publications that tell the story of the first decades of the Fenian movement, the 1850s through 1880s, what Joyce called "the Fenianism of '67." These writings fuse a series of familiar genres: autobiography,[24] confession, historical accounts or early historiography, *bil-*

23. For more on the colonialist assumptions of European historicism, see Dipesh Chakrabarty's "Note on the Term 'Historicism,'" in *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference,* 2nd ed. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), 22–23.

24. Perhaps more useful than autobiography is James Olney's term "periautography," which he defines more broadly as "writing about or around the self," stressing "its *in*definition and lack of generic rigor, its comfortably loose fit and generous adaptability." *Memory and Narrative: The Weave of Life-Writing* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), xv.

dungsromane, and prison narratives (for many of the writers were at one time or another incarcerated). However, if Fenian recollections draw on the literary conventions of all these genres, they are not fully described by any of them, simultaneously transgressing and complicating them. They are primarily texts that seek to tell the story of early Fenianism through various strategies of remembering or rememoration. While they differ to some degree in style and method, all Fenian recollections grapple with particular problematics—what is the relationship between individual memory, collective memory, and history? How can narratives of the Fenian movement be written? Can they be written? And toward what political end? As we will see, they offer contradictory answers to these questions, often even within a single text.

As their titles reveal, these narratives without exception took the form of texts of personal remembering: "personal narratives," "recollections," "reminiscences," and "memories." Unlike, for example, Charles Gavan Duffy's documentations of the Young Ireland movement,[25] these books complicate their status as history-writing and claim that the insurgent's memory counters official histories and state representations of Fenianism. These Fenian writers excavate their memories in order to produce written testimonies, texts of witnessing to versions and experiences of history hitherto deemed irrelevant to or rendered silent before colonial law and the imperial historical record. Throughout these recollections, the reader encounters often-repeated phrases that introduce historical vignettes or events by figuring the writer as direct participant or as witness—"I have seen," "I remember," or "I shall never forget." Such conventions signal that acts of bearing witness and remembering provide the narrative structure of these counterhistories. The individual nationalist's memory becomes the locus for histories repressed by hegemonic history. The Fenian writer is metaphorized; his "larger historical participation [makes them each] a metaphor of the witness of the past."[26] These recollections promise that, through the making public of those memories, a new Irish national history will be born. At the same time, such memory-work allows these writers to communicate the politics and rationality of antico-

25. While Charles Gavan Duffy wrote several histories of the Young Ireland movement and an autobiography, I am referring here to his first books on the early years of Young Ireland: *Young Ireland: A Fragment of Irish History* (1880) and *Four Years of Irish History, 1845–1849* (1883). These texts (as well as the work of John Mitchel) might be considered the immediate antecedents of these Fenian recollections with some very important similarities and differences concerning the form and politics of nationalist narration.

26. Melvin Dixon, "The Black Writer's Use of Memory," in *History and Memory in African-American Culture,* ed. Geneviève Fabre and Robert O'Meally (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 22.

lonial insurgency so often denied by the counterinsurgent ideology that this book has examined thus far.

Fenian recollections mobilize the insurgent's memories in service of producing an alternative form of national history.[27] Memory[28] allows these writers to engage in what Paul Ricoeur describes as "telling otherwise . . . in tell[ing] their own history, especially the founding events which are the ground of a collective memory."[29] Remembering and the claim to have witnessed serve as the mechanisms through which Fenian writers can challenge and supplement official history. These narratives necessarily set themselves up against 'misrepresentations' of the Fenian movement and its history—the prose of counterinsurgency,[30] those British narratives of Fenianism associated with the imperialist state that I have examined in previous chapters. I have argued that those dominant representations claim to make Fenianism visible and legible, profess to tell its truth, and most importantly deny the history and legitimacy of Fenian politics through the discourse of terrorism. Therefore, Fenian recollections stand as significant attempts to reclaim history for anticolonial resistance; driven by the will to remember, they produce and disseminate alternative historical records that challenge the legitimacy and totality of imperialist 'truth.' These texts also narrate those events hitherto deemed insignificant or false by the imperial record, thereby reinserting such episodes into a state history that presents itself as complete and closed to such interventions.[31] Building on Walter Benjamin's work, M. Christine

27. Here my reading draws on Melvin Dixon's reading of Pierre Nora's concept of *lieux de mémoire* in which he critiques Nora's Eurocentric assumptions in his analysis of memory and history but also redeploys this analysis to explore "the very kind of history or historiography that . . . achieves an alternative record of critical discussion through the exercise of memory" (18). Dixon also writes of "the depiction of black experience [that anchors] experience in memory—a memory that ultimately rewrites history" (20).

28. In this chapter, my definitions of memory and remembering emerge from the texts with which I am working. However, as a preliminary working definition, I am using Paul Ricoeur's formulation that memory is both a relation of knowledge and a relation of action that constitutes a relationship of the subject to the past and usually makes a truth-claim on the basis of this relationship. "Memory and Forgetting," in *Questioning Ethics,* ed. R. Kearney and M. Dooley (New York: Routledge, 1998), 5–12. I am grateful to Margaret Kelleher for calling this article to my attention.

29. Ricoeur 7.

30. I have taken this phrase from the work of Ranajit Guha. In his essay, "The Prose of Counter-Insurgency," Guha sets out his analysis of the prose of counterinsurgency as an official discourse, a form of colonialist knowledge that reproduces colonial relations of power in that "[t]he historian's attitude to rebels is in this instance indistinguishable from that of the State—the attitude of the hunter to his quarry. Regarded thus an insurgent is not a subject of understanding or interpretation but of extermination, and the discourse of history, far from being neutral, serves directly to instigate official violence." In *Selected Subaltern Studies,* ed. Ranajit Guha and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 64.

31. "As the form and end of history, the nation-state in effect regulates what counts as history

Boyer has argued that "[t]he writing of modern 'history'—a term coined in the eighteenth century— . . . banished subjective story-telling, eliminated the dangers of otherness, and eradicated lived traditions so that it could substitute instead a fictional order of time progressing toward the future, ever improving upon the past."[32] Fenian recollections work to challenge and to subvert the progressive, objective claims of such history-writing and to reveal its ideological foundations.

This formula in which personal history is subsumed by the project of national history is intrinsic to nationalism. I call this the synecdochal logic of nationalism or nationalism's synecdochal memory, for the writing subject becomes the synecdoche of the nation. The individual's memory is pressed into the service of and thus subsumed by the nation—the masculinist structure of the great man's version of history, founded on the overdetermined figure of the male witnessing subject, the masculine martyr or hero. A single national subject, repository of experience and memories of historical events, provides a history of the Fenian movement and thus of the Irish nation. According to this formula, Fenian recollections position the individual Fenian as the lens through which history can be seen, captured, and represented, and in this process, the Fenian subject is reduced to his function as memory site. This is a central logic of modernity, in particular of the nation-state and of modern citizenship, replicated at the level of memory.

On first reading, these texts seem to take this familiar form. Indeed, some recollections follow such a structure quite strictly, and others, which do not, as we will see, still make some synecdochal claim. For example, in an assertion common to the genre, Mark Ryan subordinates the personal and subjective nature of his recollections to the overriding imperative to provide a particular version of national history. He writes, "My sole desire is to do justice to the patriotic Irishmen with whom I had the privilege of being associated in a movement which unselfishly sought to bring about the independence of the Irish nation, and to vindicate their imperishable principles."[33] All other desires, politics, all experience itself must be subsumed by the drive to produce nationalist counterhistory. In some recollections, this claim is borne out by seamless shifts between the first-person-narrative mode of witnessing and the omniscient narration associated with traditional history-writing.

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and gives the law of historical verisimilitude that decides between the contingent and the significant." David Lloyd, *Ireland After History* 24.

32. *The City of Collective Memory: The Historical Imaginary and Architectural Entertainments* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1994), 21.

33. *Fenian Memories,* 2nd ed. (Dublin: M. H. Gill and Son, 1946), xxiii.

However, other examples complicate or undermine the synecdochal gesture. Consider Richard Pigott's declaration that he can only access his memories unevenly: "as 'through a glass darkly,' the dim shadows of previous events—some partly illumined by the vivid light of perfect memory; others discernible through the haze of intervening years."[34] In various Fenian recollections, moments of forgetting or the refusal to speak challenge the fluid relation between individual memory and the production of a new history. Amnesia and aphasia interfere with the writer's ability to produce a reliable or complete counterhistory. At other times, writers reject the idea that a single Fenian can write the history of the movement; they offer instead episodic, circumscribed, and partial memoirs, texts that anticipate or even invite challenge and supplementation.

Fenian recollections then are best described as constitutively structured by contradictions and tensions. These contradictions call attention to the movement's complex relationship to modernity and some of modernity's primary hegemonic forms—Empire, Capital, nationalism, and the state. Radical possibilities had been opened up by Fenianism in 1860s, and, as in the case of Joyce in "The Last Fenian," the writers of Fenian recollections sought to maintain these potentialities in some form while negotiating the demands of both the imperial state and an imagined postcolonial state. As a result, certain categories come under intense contestation—history, culture, memory—and the genre itself, I would argue, works to elaborate and in some cases to resolve the struggles around these terms.

In chapter 2, I have argued that radical Fenianism was decentered and possessed many of the attributes of a "nationalism against the state."[35] Hence, when Fenian writers claim to write national history at the same time that they trouble their own authorial authority and imagine their histories as incomplete, these narrative contradictions reflect the coexistence within Fenianism of statist forms with radical forms of anticolonial nationalism that critiqued the state. In their formal structures as well as their content, these texts grapple with the problem of writing the subaltern within nationalist politics. At the same time that we can read them as writing a kind of prose of counter-counterinsurgency, they are simultaneously documenting history for the Irish state coming into being. Fenian writers wrote their counterhistories in the face of the demands inaugurated by the possibility that an Irish state would exist, to some degree, in the image of the British one. Recollections had to

34. *Personal Recollections of an Irish National Journalist* (Cork: Tower Books, 1979), 1.
35. See chapter 2.

simultaneously resist imperial history and remain intelligible to the state form coming into being. As a result, in order to produce an Irish nation that would be institutionalized in the state and an Irish subject who would gain a new citizenship, as much forgetting and repression as remembering was required. This was all the more so for Irish nationalists who, within and between their various organizations and politics, had never been able to agree upon what constituted Ireland and the Irish. As Joyce documents, the possibility of Home Rule demanded numerous forms of forgetting—of sectarian and political divisions, of memories incompatible with a progressive history of the nation, of those subjectivities and political activism and resistance deemed deviant or irrelevant to the historical record, of ideas of "Irishness" that worked against the imperative to unity, of profound schisms within organizations such as the IRB. Therefore, the injunction to remember produced by Home Rule coexisted with an equally strong injunction to forget. Their complicated form reflects and thematizes the problem of what happens when radical, antistatist politics finds itself facing the emergence of the postcolonial nation-state.

We find a productive example of the complex tension between memory and forgetting in John O'Leary's explanation of what motivated him to write his recollections. He writes:

> Luby, Mulcahy, myself, and some few others of that old set still survive, but I of late seem to myself as if I were living in a graveyard. I hasten back then to another past which I feel is not altogether dead, and cannot die while there is still life in the old land. You may forget it for a time, and even come to condemn it, or at least pretend to do so, in blatant balderdash about union of hearts and the like; but all that passes away, and you are for ever brought back to that past, and the other pasts out of which it arose. (*RFF* 2:25)[36]

This passage clearly resonates with Joyce's description of O'Leary as a kind of shade or specter even before his death. While I will return to the politics of melancholia in this passage, first I want to call attention to O'Leary's description of the moment in which he is writing—the period of the dominance of "balderdash" such as the "union of the hearts." As I've already suggested, this phrase was central to British politicians' accommodation of the Home Rule movement, and it marks the ways in which constitutional nationalism came to dominate the Irish political scene in the last decades of the nineteenth

36. I refer to a reprint of the first edition of this text, *Recollections of Fenians and Fenianism* (Shannon: Irish University Press, 1969), 2:25. I will henceforth cite O'Leary's *Recollections* as *RFF*.

century, a development that, as we have seen, is central to Joyce's narrative of the demise of radical Fenianism. As I've noted, at this historical conjuncture, even some of the most radical Fenian anticolonialists seemed to agree that constitutional agitation could serve as part of a two-pronged approach that coupled legal measures with violent resistance. O'Leary viewed this hybrid politics as doomed and gave a series of lectures about this, including one pointedly called "The Irish Question: Unionist and Home Rule Delusions." For O'Leary, the hegemony of Home Rule politics signaled that some form of an independent Irish state might be "no longer in a future heaven," to use Fanon's phrase. The questions of what Home Rule would mean and how the nation would be institutionalized led to attempts to close down what had been a more open field of contestation that fell under the broad category of Irish nationalism. As a more mainstream nationalism came to the fore, it began to shape narratives and histories in preparation for the capture of the state. When O'Leary writes in this passage of the possibility of the death of the past, he refers to the way that at this moment, there was a project not just of *restoring* histories but of *repressing* and *forgetting* them, the institutionalized amnesia central to state history that is part of the subjectification and interpellation of the citizen-subjects of a possible independent Irish state. He claims to write from a graveyard, positioning his own narrative as a kind of haunting and as a form of melancholia that resists the attempt to consign early Fenianism to the grave.

The passage by O'Leary signals the important ways that this dominant model of nationalist memory is subverted, refused, or at the very least complicated by Fenian recollections' refusal to forget. It is striking that he, and most writers of the genre, claim to restore memories forgotten or repressed by the nation-state. It helps to remember the etymological relation between the words "amnesty" and "amnesia."[37] Indeed, the *Oxford English Dictionary* cites the originary meaning of "amnesty" as "forgetfulness, oblivion; an intentional overlooking." While the Irish Republican Brotherhood had engaged in sustained agitation for the granting of amnesty to Irish political prisoners beginning in 1869, by 1899 the Irish National Amnesty Association had disbanded after the last prisoner had been released by British authorities as part of the movement toward Home Rule.[38] Ironically, once granted, the amnesty for which Fenians had protested constituted a kind of legal retelling of the

37. I owe this insight to Kevin Whelan, who generously called it to my attention when I lectured on this subject at the Notre Dame Irish Studies Summer seminar in 2005.

38. Owen McGee, *The IRB: The Irish Republican Brotherhood from the Land League to Sinn Fein* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2005), 287.

events of early Fenianism and the IRB, one that separated anticolonial resistance from criminal categories such as treason-felony and sedition. In this period, when Fenians were granted amnesty by the British state, we can view this political gesture not only as conciliatory but as an attempt to contain the radical elements of Fenian politics, to reintegrate it into a new narrative of the nation-state by redefining it as not militant, not insurrectionary, not treasonous. In other words, as much as amnesty had been framed as a political goal, it in fact served as a kind of mechanism for state-sponsored amnesia, and it is deep in the midst of such a process that O'Leary writes. O'Leary calls attention to such amnesia when he writes, "You may forget it for a time, and even come to condemn it, or at least pretend to do so, in blatant balderdash about union of hearts and the like." He insists that Fenian recollections are written in some sense against two manifestations of the nation-state and statist politics—the British Liberal state with its Home Rule discourse and the possible Irish nation-state that might emerge from this. He both replicates and complicates the synecdochal memory that is becoming hegemonic at this moment and insists on the persistence of subaltern pasts that are denied, those that challenge the seamless fabric of modern British and Irish history.[39]

O'Leary is typical of what we see in the genre as a whole. These writings promise to deliver alternative history but struggle to find a form in which to do so that does not replicate the protocols of the forms of history against which they are writing. For example, one convention of Fenian recollections is the refusal of narrative closure or resolution, which is instead replaced by the assertion of absences or shortcomings in the text. For example, at the end of his *Personal Narrative of the Irish Republican Brotherhood* published in 1904, Joseph Denieffe reframes his entire recollection as limited and partial in its scope.

> In the preceding chapters the names of many brave men who did noble duty in distant places, and with whom I did not often come into personal contact, do not appear, for the simple reason that my narrative is a personal one and deals only with the matters with which I was identified or closely connected, and the facts of which I can vouch for as being absolutely true. But as these men were part and parcel of the movement and deserve the most honorable mention that could be given them, I will endeavor, in this chapter, to do justice to the memory of all whose names I can now recall. Among the brave

39. My formulation here draws on Dipesh Chakrabarty's assertion that "Subaltern pasts are like stubborn knots that stand out and break up the otherwise evenly woven surface of the fabric." "Minority Histories, Subaltern Pasts," in *Provincializing Europe* 106.

> and faithful men whose names I have not yet mentioned, or perhaps barely mentioned, are the noble heroic women who took up the cause when their husbands or relatives were arrested and imprisoned were: Miss Ellen O'Leary [etc.].[40]

As much as this text relies upon memory as synecdoche for national history, the refusal of narrative closure makes apparent the impossibility of success. Denieffe, like many other Fenian writers, acknowledges that his own memories are not exhaustive in the way that national history demands. The personal nature of his recollections means that the text cannot claim to achieve comprehensiveness or definitiveness. It is notable that the primary absence that Denieffe identifies is a gendered one; female insurgents are absent from the history he has just provided. There is a fundamental incompatibility between the masculinist logic of his personal narrative and the remembrance of Fenian women. This is expressed by the curious slip in the passage in which "the brave and faithful *men* whose names I have not yet mentioned . . . are the noble heroic *women*" (my emphases). In order to be memorialized, the category women is actually subsumed under the identification "men," a grammatical illogic that signals the incommensurability between the structure of recollections and the claim to full representation of the Irish nation. Many other recollections have a similar disavowal at the end of the text. This refusal of closure often takes the form of citations of other recollections, of making space for conflicting accounts. Such endings theorize national history as not unitary and homogenous, but as an accumulation of heterogenous, often conflicting accounts. These texts are thus often structured by a radical, complex sense of subjectivity.

The lack of closure reflects the movement itself. In an 1868 essay, "How to Deal with Fenianism," George Sigerson describes the movement as "hydra-headed" and then goes on to explain: "Its mode of government is not from above downwards, but from beneath upwards. Its root cannot be severed at a single stroke, for it does not spring from one or two principal men, but arises by some thousands of inconspicuous rootlets."[41] This grassroots, hydra-like form of organization meant that central leadership was often rendered irrelevant to local cells of the organization. This allowed them to maintain relations with diverse politics and movements—from the Brotherhood of St.

40. While Denieffe's *A Personal Narrative of the Irish Republican Brotherhood* was originally published in serialized form in *The Gael* in 1904, I am referring to the reprinted edition (Shannon: Irish University Press, 1969), 151.

41. Reprinted in Deane, *The Field Day Anthology of Irish Literature* 244–45.

Patrick to the First International—without subsuming them within a nationalist imperative. At the same time, as a "nationalism against the state," Fenianism rejected constitutional politics and engagement with the legal channels of the British state, relying instead on extraconstitutional struggle and "physical force" when deemed necessary.[42] Hence, when Fenian writers claim to write national history at the same time that they trouble their own authorial authority and imagine their histories as incomplete, these narrative contradictions reflect the coexistence within Fenianism of statist forms with radical forms of anticolonial nationalism that critiqued the state.

The decentered structure of Fenianism made it difficult for the British authorities to repress it effectively, in particular when using the system of informers upon which it had relied in the past. The controversy over informers provides another lens through which to consider the contradictory impulses at work in the genre. Autobiographical nationalist history relies on a structure of individual witnessing. This idea that a single subject could tell the whole truth of the movement is central to the use of informers, the British state's primary form of the surveillance of Fenians. In a parallel literary history, mid-Victorian British and Irish popular culture was saturated with first-person narratives that promised to unveil the secrets of the movement to an anxious public. Thus, it is not surprising that Fenian recollections would work to avoid replicating autobiographical histories that relied on this formula. In fact, an insistence that an individual insurgent cannot possibly provide the history of Fenianism constitutes a textual rejection of the logic of informers as well as the search for a literary form in keeping with Fenianism's hydralike, cell structure.

Similarly, Fenian writers relativize the truth. For example, O'Leary describes his project in the following way:

> This is a book of recollections, appreciations, impressions, feelings, opinions, and probably prejudices, but certainly not mainly one of facts and not at all one of research. I hope I need scarcely to say that I state nothing that I do not believe to be absolutely true, but it is far from possible for me to know always that what I say is true. (*RFF* 2:100)

Such a description acknowledges both the limitations of individual memory and the possibility of conflicting accounts, which relates to the radical structure of Fenianism that I have just described. The individual is an inadequate

42. For a more complete overview of the Fenian movement's structure and politics, see chapter 2.

reservoir of national memory. This move not only defies or resists informer logic—which parallels the structure of synecdochal memory as a technology of surveillance used by the state. As we will see, this refusal to tell the whole truth of Fenianism also deeply disturbs the relation between the individual and national memory. Recollections are marked by aphasia, by the inability to remember, by interruption, all of which produce fragmented, episodic, and nonlinear narratives. They emphasize, particularly in the case of O'Leary's *Recollections,* the ways in which individual memory fails the demands of the nation-state, as they engage in forgetting that is strategic or even parodic.

Fenian recollections are often preoccupied with the state in other ways, in particular in the texts written by those who were incarcerated as convicts or internees. Here the genre intersects with the prison narrative, representing imprisonment and the particular conditions of captivity to which Fenians were subject. These recollections include scenes of the legal-juridical system as well as detailed accounts of the state's new forms of surveillance and new modes of intelligence. Such testimony forms the basis of a critique of the British state as counterinsurgent, as a terrorist institution, and as violating the very rights that it guarantees to its citizens and subjects. These texts tell the truth about or inform on the state, reversing the informer logic on which counterinsurgency relied. At times, they remember this interface with the strong state as a site of loss and failure, representing the ways in which radical Fenianism, "the Fenianism of '67," was defeated or repressed when the state transformed its apparatuses and technologies of power in relation to this new object that it called terrorism. At other moments, recollections document how anticolonial struggle was able to resist and to subvert the state, for example through its infiltration of the British army.

These examples ask us to consider the following—why is it important to remember the emergence of the antiterrorist state at their historical moment of writing? I would argue that these instances of remembering stand as part of an anticipation of the emergence of the postcolonial state and the problem that the state form posed for radical politics, particularly for anticolonialism. Fenian recollections sought to remind their readers of the underside of the modern state form in which nationalists invested their political energy at the turn of the century. Vijay Prashad has traced what he so vividly calls the disemboweling of anticolonial radical politics of the mid-twentieth century by its investment in the Liberal state during the period of major decolonization in the 1950s and 1960s.[43] Here we have a much earlier example of this process

43. *The Darker Nations: A People's History of the Third World* (New York: New Press, 2007).

in the case of Ireland, and recollections express a recognition of this as the central political problem of decolonization. Fenian writings are produced for the Irish nation-state coming into being but simultaneously critique that state and its repressive relation to radicalism.

Therefore, the structuring contradictions that I have described make clear the following: radical Fenianism's resistance to historicization and to the logics of mainstream (statist, bourgeois) nationalism; the difficulties presented by the task of writing about radical Fenianism given its relation to the imperial state; and the problems of writing about radical anticolonialism in anticipation of the postcolonial state. The genre of Fenian recollection offers us an understanding of what happens when radical politics comes to various interfaces with the state form through strategies of counterinsurgency, for example, or when faced with the imminent capture of the state promised at the start of decolonization. They show us, particularly through their formal structures, what happens when radical politics becomes institutionalized—how it resists this process and how it becomes co-opted by it.

These tensions between the promise to provide stable counterhistory and the vicissitudes of doing so are mirrored in the reception of Fenian recollections by critics, historians, and fellow nationalists upon their publication and even to the present. For the most part, these texts have been read as curiosities and failures in both literary and historical terms. While some have been republished for their "historical" value, many are only available in the archives of Irish nationalist newspapers or in rare book collections; they are not often read or made the subject of scholarly attention, and then never as literary or theoretical texts. Most often, as I will discuss below in the case of John O'Leary's *Recollections,* these texts are said to fail because they do not meet the expectations of either autobiography or nationalist history. In their random, often limited nature, recollections have been unsatisfying to readers who are looking for a definitive, official account of the elusive Fenian movement.

Can we read the failure of these recollections differently? How do they fail strategically to meet the demands of statist nationalism, specifically the demands that emerge in relation to the imagined imminence of the postcolonial state? I want to use Jacqueline Rose's provocative definition of failure to present an alternative reading of this genre. Rose writes, "[f]ailure is . . . a measure of the impossibility of what is being required. Failure understood in this context is suggestive and provocative."[44] Similarly, engaging Gramsci's work on the subaltern, David Lloyd has suggested that "'episodic and frag-

44. *States of Fantasy* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1996), 89.

mentary' history can be read as the sign of another *mode* of narrative, rather than an incomplete one, of another *principle* of organization, rather than one yet to be unified."[45] Lloyd's work emerges in part from the scholarship of the Subaltern Studies collective, the members of which, as Robert Young has noted, have devoted their historiographical and theoretical attention to the study of failure[46]—the failure of the nation-state (embodied by the bourgeoisie) to represent fully the people; the failure of revolutionary politics in the postcolonial scene; the failure of the elite and of the state to understand that modernity is always shot through with the vital subaltern, which is rejected as modernity's other; the failure of the postcolonial nation-state to effect radical social and political transformation. Indeed, in the brief essay considered the manifesto of the Subaltern Studies collective, Ranajit Guha identifies the focus of the collective's work as "the study of this historic failure of the nation to come into its own . . . [and] the recognition of the co-existence and interaction of the elite and subaltern domains of politics" in both nationalism and modernity.[47]

Keeping in mind these lessons of the postcolonial, Fenian recollections fail, I argue, for reasons that are theoretically and historically instructive. I turn my attention to this body of Irish writing not only because of what it teaches us about the ways in which radical politics anticipated and grappled with the process of decolonization, but also because Fenian recollections provide us with one generative way to understand the intimate relationship between Irish writing and Postcolonial Theory. To put it another way, I wish to offer an example of the ways in which one particular archive of Irish political writing anticipates several of the central and most important problematics of Postcolonial Studies. I'm not suggesting that it is the only or the first example of Irish writing that engages in such a project, but that it is a thought-provoking example; such theorizations intensify in this period because of the Home Rule movement and the seeming promise of an independent Irish nation-state. Fenian recollections are one early example of postcolonialism; they open up what we think of as theory, and also call into question our periodization of the project that we name the postcolonial, a project that Irish Studies is particularly suited to challenge.[48] Many of the writers of Fenian recollections

45. *Ireland after History* 127.

46. *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), 352.

47. Guha, "On Some Aspects of the Historiography of Colonial India," in *Selected Subaltern Studies* 43.

48. I am not at all suggesting that Fenian recollections are the first form of anticolonial critique in Ireland. Indeed, throughout the nineteenth century—in the writings of the United Irishmen, speeches of Daniel O'Connell about the Repeal movement, and the writings of the Young Ireland

seem to understand just what is at stake in their theorizations of history and memory. They also see the state form as the most important institution of modernity that they must negotiate and as posing an urgent problem; as they choose how to narrate the past, they imagine the potential future of an independent Ireland. These writers proleptically envision the problems of fashioning the postcolonial state, of pressing radical anticolonialism into a form (both textual and political) largely determined by and derivative of imperial state formation and imperialist historicism.

JOHN O'LEARY'S *RECOLLECTIONS OF FENIANS AND FENIANISM*

The convergence of failure and contradiction that I have just described is particularly apparent in John O'Leary's *Recollections of Fenians and Fenianism.* One of the early publications of its kind, O'Leary's narrative takes some of the tendencies of the genre and manifests them with such intensity that the text appears idiosyncratic. However, these qualities make O'Leary's text a most useful example; what is less obvious in other recollections becomes a more apparent structuring principle. As an example of recollections, it is anomalous but also paradigmatic. Therefore, I will look closely at O'Leary's text as a key to understanding the genre, and then I will examine three problematics that allow him to manage contradiction—melancholia, blasphemy, and the critique of historicism.

The history of its anticipation, publication, and reception is symptomatic of the "failures," in Rose's sense, of the genre. By the time that John O'Leary published *Recollections* in 1896, the book had been long awaited by an avid reading public in Ireland. He was one of the key figures in the early years of the Irish Republican Brotherhood, serving as the editor of the Fenian newspaper, the *Irish People.* He was convicted of treason-felony in 1865, serving the next six years in a British prison; he then spent fourteen years in exile in Europe. O'Leary eventually returned to Ireland from France, a triumphant and celebrated homecoming made possible by an Amnesty Act that pardoned numerous deported Fenians. He continued to play an active role in the IRB upon his return, and throughout the 1890s, news that O'Leary was writing

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movement, to name a few examples—we can see anticolonial politics that clearly anticipates some of the critiques of colonialism that are central to postcolonialism. However, Fenian recollections stand as some of the first Irish writing to engage with the challenges of decolonization and an independent Ireland's relation to European modernity and to anticolonial radicalisms.

his reminiscences generated excitement among Irish nationalists. Broadsheets and subscription lists circulated to facilitate advance purchase of the forthcoming work.[49]

But, upon its publication, many responses to the narrative were perfunctory at best. On January 4, 1897, Douglas Hyde wrote, "indeed every word you have written interested me, and me perhaps more than others. . . . "[50] Such a lukewarm declaration of interest from the president of the National Literary Society is hardly the unequivocal assertion of literary and historical value anticipated by those who canvassed for advance subscriptions. In addition, William Butler Yeats, who had urged O'Leary to record his memories, viewed the book as disappointing. His review in the *Bookman* of February 1897 provides an account of O'Leary's political influence and importance rather than a discussion of the text itself.[51]

Recent critics share such opinions of *Recollections of Fenians and Fenianism.* O'Leary's biographer, Marcus Bourke, states, "To the student of Fenianism, or of Irish affairs generally during the period covered by O'Leary's memoirs, they usually produce a feeling of disappointment."[52] Bourke's assessment recapitulates common criticisms of O'Leary's text: that it does not reveal enough secret information about the IRB, and that it is not a definitive, complete history of the movement. Bourke also describes O'Leary's book as unusually "discursive."[53] Echoing this criticism, Malcolm Brown has described O'Leary's writing as having an unsatisfactory prose style "[loaded] with the rhetorical device the French call *expoliation,* the nervous mannerism that corrects all its assertions with a qualifying afterthought. . . . "[54] Indeed, the text displays a general unwillingness to assert anything unequivocally and a repetitive insistence on its own limitations and fragmentary status. O'Leary sets the text up as the failure that readers later declare it. The following passage is typical:

> And here, perhaps, it may be no harm to impress on the reader's mind that, as I am not writing my autobiography, in any other than a very partial and

49. Several examples exist in the NLI manuscripts.

50. NLI Ms. 5927 Assorted Letters to John O'Leary.

51. *Some letters from W. B. Yeats to John O'Leary and his sister (From originals in the Berg collection),* ed. Allan Wade (New York: New York Public Library, 1953).

52. Marcus Bourke, *John O'Leary: A Study in Irish Separatism* (Tralee: Anvil Books, 1967), 212.

53. Ibid. 213. In the introduction to the reprinted edition of *Recollections of Fenians and Fenianism,* Bourke acknowledges that he does not criticize O'Leary for this particular attribute in his writing. *RFF,* "Introduction" x.

54. *The Politics of Irish Literature: From Thomas Davis to W. B. Yeats* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1972), 153.

> imperfect sense, I am not writing a history of Fenianism in any sense at all. Not what Fenianism did for Ireland, or failed to do, is, properly speaking, my theme, but merely how Fenianism affected me and how I affected it. This seems a narrow and somewhat egotistic—it is certainly an egotistic—point of view; but it is the only one possible to me just now. (*RFF* 1:67)

For O'Leary, writing as a direct participant, the personal nature of the narrative places a limit on the historical value of the text and offers access only to fragments of history. O'Leary rejects the synecdochal vision of some recollections as well as the informer logic that they unwittingly reproduce. His self-reflexive narrative, what he himself calls his "incurable discursiveness" (*RFF* 2:132), is not simply a mannerism or a sign of failure. Instead, I contend, he attempts to work through the more radical possibilities of the genre. In doing so, he refashions national narrative, as he calls the strange stylistic and formal attributes of his prose "a somewhat Irish way of writing."

From the start of his *Recollections of Fenians and Fenianism,* O'Leary historicizes his project for us in a precise manner and, by doing so, calls his readers' attention to the historical conditions of possibility for this particular form of Irish history-writing. He opens with a mysterious invocation of how his present moment of writing in the early and mid-1890s bears upon the project of recollection that lies before him. In the very first lines of his book, he writes:

> It is with a sad heart and a somewhat doubtful mind that I set myself down, on the borders of old age, to say something of what I felt and thought and did in my early youth and mature manhood. Times have changed in Ireland greatly since then, and, no doubt, I have very greatly changed myself—but scarcely with the times. Whether this be my misfortune or my fault, or simply a necessary and inevitable result of the passage of the years, it is impossible for me to tell. . . . I am certainly very little in love with the present, and but for my strong hope of a future other and better than the present, I should have but little pleasure in looking back upon my past or any past. But to come to that past. Where shall I begin? There is something of a difficulty here, though perhaps not a great one. Nearly all our thoughts and acts have their roots in a past whose distance it is almost impossible to calculate. (*RFF* 1:1–2)

I quote these first paragraphs of O'Leary's *Recollections* at length because they are atypical of the genre and reveal the very different approach and structure that his particular manifestation of recollections takes, although one,

as I have suggested, that reflects problematics present in less apparent ways in other texts. Consider opening lines from some other recollections—"The Fenian Movement, which had its inception in Ireland in the Fifties of the nineteenth century, was a continuation of the struggle which had been maintained throughout seven hundred years against the English invaders" (Devoy 1); "I was born in Uracly, one of a number of scattered villages in the parish of Kilconly . . . " (Ryan 1); "Early in June 1855, the Emmet Monument Association of New York was steadily organizing, and its members were drilling once a week" (Danieffe 1). O'Leary does not begin his text with the authoritative tone of history, the natal or childhood moment that marks traditional autobiography, or the first event in his memory of Fenianism. Rather he begins in the present tense with a statement of affect that describes the contemporary moment and mood of his own writing. The past is figured as a period of history with which he is more sympathetic; however, it is also at a "distance it is almost impossible to calculate."

The temporal conundrum that frames O'Leary's text immediately provides the reader with a striking model of history and memory. First, however important the past is to his own identity and to the Irish nation, O'Leary's own memory is not a transparent medium through which history can flow. The personal is not subsumed by the national. Rather, memory and history are shaped not only by his past experience but by his present state of mind and the present history in which he remembers. The present to which he refers, the historical conjuncture during which his act of writing takes place, remains vague at this point, but is indicated as problematic in two ways. O'Leary is "very little in love with [the present]," and this disenchantment is the lens through which he views and understands the past about which he will write. Therefore, his writing position is one of critique and disillusionment; he does not monumentalize a mythic history that has led to or necessarily progresses toward a triumphant present. As we later discover, he lacks faith in Irish nationalism of the 1890s with its emphasis on constitutional politics and its acceptance of Home Rule, and therefore rejects a model of writing shaped by an Enlightenment notion of progress.

Second, the temporal distance of even his own personal experience raises the problem of how to access, select, and represent memories as the genre demands of him. Memory and writing must perform a task that is necessary but difficult if not impossible, and the questions of how that distance can be traversed, of what relation exists between the present alluded to and distant history, are set up from the very start. These considerations are not bracketed off into a preface by O'Leary (in fact he insists on the uselessness of such

prefaces), nor are they placed at the very end of the text in a compensatory gesture. Rather, they are the first questions that the reader encounters in the text; they give his two-volume work its structure and shape.

O'Leary's immediate solution to this dilemma is an understanding of the relation between personal memory and national history that does not follow the pattern of synecdochal memory. Instead he asserts that "I am not writing of my relation to the universe, but merely of my relation to Fenianism" (*RFF* 1:2). As suggested by the adverb "merely," O'Leary's understanding of how the insurgent's experience and memory-narratives relate to universal history, and also, as we shall see, national history, allows not for an exhaustive history but for a narrative that is limited and marked by proscriptions.

We must look more carefully at this problematic present that O'Leary invokes at the start of his book. The contemporary scene of writing leads O'Leary to formulate recollections as a genre that cannot provide conventional history, national collective memory, or a transparent recuperation of the past. What are "these times [that] have changed in Ireland greatly" with which he is "very little in love"? We have our first answer in the second chapter of the recollections. After describing his first feelings of national belonging and nationalist commitment as a young man, O'Leary alludes to the present historical developments of which he is so wary. Commentary about the conviction of John Mitchel by a packed jury in 1848 leads to another statement about the discontinuity between past and present. O'Leary writes:

> Mitchel said, and no doubt thought, that the victory rested with him, inasmuch as he had forced the Government into certain illegal courses. But, alas! it was not so; and it is somewhat a mystery to me now why Mitchel could have ever thought it was so. Surely he must have known how the English have gone on all the time shooting, hanging, transporting, or imprisoning us at their own sweet will, with slight regard for law, and next to none whatever for morality. This seems a hard saying in this age of "the union of hearts"; but I think the English and Irish hearts are not the less likely to hold together by Irish heads keeping a little cool. (*RFF* 1:9)

In this passage, O'Leary begins with a critique of Mitchel's analysis, drawing attention to the pitfalls of any anticolonial politics that buys too fully into the ideas of legality constructed by the British state. O'Leary argues that the basis of victory here, what Mitchel sees as a transgression, is in fact not one at all, for the very idea of legality has its boundaries at the periphery of the British nation. What is illegal in the context of British law does not apply in Ireland;

in fact, "illegal courses" are the primary mechanisms for executing the law in the British government of Ireland.[55] This insight suggests that the narrative of progress toward the manifestation of the nation in an independent state is neither linear nor constant, as "victory" is much more elusive and rests outside of the faith in the modern nation-state espoused by Mitchel in his understanding of his own imprisonment.

This critique of nationalist politics that participates in and relies upon British standards of legality immediately leads O'Leary to comment on the contemporary moment. He suggests that his analysis is incompatible with "this age of 'the union of hearts'" and of Gladstonian Home Rule politics. Thus, the hegemony of constitutional politics among Irish nationalists defines the present with which O'Leary found himself "little in love." O'Leary was one of the few members of the IRB who rejected engagement in parliamentary politics as a legitimate or useful mode of attaining Irish independence. He repeatedly committed himself to physical force, violent rebellion within Ireland, as the only means of attaining independence. Therefore, it makes absolute sense that his critique of the union of hearts proceeds directly from his analysis of the problem of legality for anticolonial insurgents. For O'Leary, nationalists who engaged in parliamentary means refused to see that Irish resistance was always constructed as criminal. This insight was borne out by the late 1890s when Irish MPs were expelled in a sudden rash of accusations that charged them with engaging in seditious, criminal activities, thereby undermining the access that they had secured through constitutional means.

O'Leary had written about the pitfalls of Home Rule before, as he in fact worked behind the scenes to persuade the IRB not to be taken in by the prevalent idea of the union of hearts. In a draft of a lecture titled "'The Irish Question': Unionist and Home Rule Delusions"[56] most likely given in 1886 during a lecture tour of England, he writes dismissively: "Talk of union of hearts, indeed! *Credat Judeus Apella*. We may come to love England, or to cease to hate her, when she gives up ruling us against our will. . . . " He then goes on to suggest that Home Rule is separate from the goal of Irish independence: "Passing over many minor delusions and deceptions, I come to what may turn out to be the most serious one of all. Nearly all the Home

55. O'Leary's insights refer to the way in which the idea of legality constructed by British law was continually transgressed as the British state instituted measures illegal by its own standards in order to uphold "the law." The most obvious example of this contradiction is the repeated suspension of habeas corpus in nineteenth-century Ireland (and Northern Ireland today). For more on this question of legal and illegal measures in British rule of Ireland, see chapters 2 and 3.

56. This unpublished lecture can be found in NLI Ms. 8002 Letters from John O'Leary (c. 1870–1900) in Folder 1 Lectures and Articles by O'Leary.

Rulers I know think that we are within very measurable distance indeed of our goal. . . . " O'Leary identifies the prospect of decolonization under the auspices of Home Rule as a delusion. He then sets out the numerous ways in which Home Rule was simply a perpetuation rather than the cessation of British rule in Ireland, drawing attention to the ways that proposed Home Rule legislation maintained British authority over the police force in Ireland, for example. O'Leary argues that Home Rule and the creation of an Irish Parliament with limited, local power conceded certain authority to Ireland, but on Britain's own terms and in a form that remained in the image of and fully subsumed under the British state. The hypocrisy of this Home Rule rhetoric[57] leads O'Leary to call it a "paper union of hearts" in which no "freedom from foreign control"[58] is attained.

O'Leary returns over and over to this present climate of the "Union of Hearts," always in very resonant ways. For example, in a footnote during a section in which he discusses British prejudice against Irish and Anglo-Irish subjects, he notes ironically:

> Of course in this year, 1890, as I write, things seem to have altogether changed with a large section of Englishmen . . . [t]o [whom] Irishmen have come to wear quite an angelic appearance. How much of this new mood is felt, or how much feigned, I know not, but I assure our admirers that our way of regarding them, no matter what some of us may say, has not materially altered. (*RFF* 1:150)

Several such attempts to dismantle misconceptions about the state of Anglo–Irish relations are found throughout O'Leary's text. He suggests that the discourse of "the union of hearts" involves simply a ridiculous inversion of past racial and cultural stereotypes of the Irish; hibernophobia is replaced by a hibernophilia, which are simply two sides of colonial discourse on Ireland, as we saw in the case of Arnold's essay on Celtic literature. This inversion denies and represses not only the history of anti-Irish discourse in Britain that this book has explored but the persistence of anticolonial politics in Ireland.

Later when O'Leary writes of the subject of prejudice and hatred between Irish and British in the past, he calls attention to the repression of this history during the Home Rule era. Writing of the seeming cessation of "struggle

57. Gladstone made no secret of the fact that the union of hearts and his Home Rule Bill were designed primarily to "[bring] order to Ireland and [to ensure] its loyalty to the empire" rather than to afford independence to Ireland. Liz Curtis 137.

58. *RFF* 1:27.

against England" and how Irish nationalists seem "even to 'cave in' altogether," he qualifies this assertion in a footnote:

> Of course this is only seeming. The leaders, naturally, "cave in" often, but the people never. Their great fault, as possibly their greatest misfortune, is, that they but too often fail to recognize the rogues and shams till these rogues and shams quite fully divest themselves of their masques. (*RFF* 2:130)

This revealing aside sets up an analysis of nationalist politics that I will argue becomes the lynchpin of O'Leary's *Recollections*. It echoes David Lloyd's insight that "it is a paradox of nationalism that though it may often summon into being a 'people' that is to form and subtend the nation-state, it is always confronted with that people as a potentially disruptive *excess* over the nation and the state."[59] Not only does O'Leary reject the mainstream nationalist leaders who have "caved in" to British pressure to accept Home Rule, but he critiques constitutional, representative politics on the same grounds as Lloyd. However much "the people" might seem to accept these "rogues and shams," they and their politics still figure as that "disruptive excess." The Irish people[60] cannot be fully represented in the state forms offered by seats in British Parliament or acquiescence to Home Rule politics. The heterogeneity of Irish anticolonial politics as exists among "the people" can neither be reduced to the politics of a few MPs nor adapted to the ideology of the Home Rule movement. For O'Leary, the form of Fenianism in the past held out an alternative to this gap between the people and politics produced by representation in the imperial state form.

But O'Leary can only access this past as a kind of spectral presence that haunts Ireland as it prepares to enter into full modernity as an independent nation-state. To return to a passage cited earlier, he writes:

> Luby, Mulcahy, myself, and some few others of that old set still survive, but I of late seem to myself as if I were living in a graveyard. I hasten back then to another past which I feel is not altogether dead, and cannot die while there is still life in the old land. You may forget it for a time, and even come to condemn it, or at least pretend to do so, in blatant balderdash about union of hearts and the like; but all that passes away, and you are for ever brought back to that past, and the other pasts out of which it arose. (*RFF* 2:25)

59. Lloyd, *Ireland after History* 189.

60. Not incidentally, "the Irish People" is the title of the early Fenian newspaper that O'Leary edited for several years before his imprisonment.

In this passage, which clearly resonates with Joyce's "The Last Fenian," O'Leary sets up a topos that appears throughout the genre—the iconography of ghostliness. Fenian writers repeatedly describe themselves and their writing as haunted, represent their memories as replete with ghosts that speak through them as they record their recollections, or represent the past itself as a ghostly presence that visits them. O'Leary's articulation of spectrality also frames his condition as a Fenian of '67 as melancholic. The past, "not altogether dead," continues to haunt Ireland as a living presence that has been incorporated into its identity; it appears over and over, a repetition that marks the refusal to mourn. When O'Leary asserts that "you are for ever brought back to that past, and the other pasts out of which it arose," he insists on the impossibility of accepting loss and forgetting, the mourning-work of acceptance and integration demanded by the mainstream politics of the "union of the hearts." Through melancholia, he resists the institutionalization of memory by the imperial state in preparation for the postcolonial state; melancholic memory becomes a mode of insurgency against statist forgetting. Using psychoanalysis as a lens through which to consider O'Leary's representation of his own remembering, it seems that, like Joyce, he offers a reversal of Freud's designation of mourning as normative and melancholia as pathological, a reversal that echoes contemporary scholarship in Postcolonial and Critical Race Theory. His elegiac and oxymoronic description of "living in a graveyard" refers not only to the death of his fellow insurgents but also to the condemnation or burial of the past. To make the past dead is impossible and transitory. Thus, mourning fails and is pathological in its refusal to acknowledge that the past remains alive. You cannot easily consign the lost object, here radical Fenianism, to the graveyard of history because "you are for ever brought back to that past, and the other pasts out of which it arose." The Home Rule movement enacts false closure, a sort of amnesia that renders the past dead rather than an active presence constituting the present and the future. The past is not acknowledged as a productive and living force in Irish politics, replaced instead by empty romanticization and valorization and then finally forgotten. What constitutes that past is the radical politics of early Fenianism—for example, its use of violence and guerilla warfare against colonial rule, its ties to the First International, the role of women in the struggle for freedom, and all those radical potentialities that I have described as a "nationalism against the state." Home Rule politics, specifically the rhetoric of reconciliation that demanded recasting "union" as the necessary counterpart of Gladstonian politics concerning Ireland, required the active forgetting and repression of the recent history of Fenianism and of radical insurrectionary

resistance to colonialism. "The people" of whom O'Leary writes exist as an excess because these memories live within them, resistant to and disruptive of such domestication.

Melancholia, I argue, becomes a textual strategy by which Fenian writers can both diagnose and counter a premature process of mourning; it is also a means whereby those shards of the past that might hold out possibilities other than Home Rule or the victory of constitutional and Celticist nationalism might be allowed to haunt the present. Melancholia allows that that which has been lost is not relinquished but remains and that it might be revivified. O'Leary's insistence on the repetition and reappearance of the past allows for the persistence of loss but also invites that loss to haunt Irish consciousness with potentialities from the past. The genre of Fenian recollection offers us a vision of modernity and politics haunted by other radical possibilities that, however they failed, refuse to be buried by the forgetting of the postcolonial state.

O'Leary is writing against not only statist forgetting, but the channeling of anticolonial nationalism into modern institutional forms and into the writing of history central to that institutionalization. Thus, the melancholy of the text serves to remember very particular pasts. It seeks to challenge, first, the emerging imbrication of the imperial state with the Catholic Church (a development that anticipates the merging of the Church with the postcolonial state) and, second, the representation of "that past, and the other pasts out of which it arose" through the protocols of imperial historicism. O'Leary engages in the former critique through the assertion that his text is blasphemous, and he critiques historicism by setting his *Recollections* against other dominant forms of history-writing.

JOHN O'LEARY AND THE CATEGORY OF BLASPHEMY

John O'Leary devotes much of the second volume of *Recollections of Fenians and Fenianism* to exploring the Fenian doctrine of "no priests in politics." His obvious imperative is to expose the ways that the British state and the Catholic Church operated in tandem to repress Fenian insurgency in Ireland.[61] According to O'Leary and other Fenians, the Church operated through technologies of surveillance similar to those of the imperial state, disciplining or even excommunicating those who subscribed to Fenian politics. O'Leary provides the following example:

61. See Donal MacCartney and Oliver P. Rafferty.

> Miss — gets the *Irish People.* Father — heard it, and went to her house and told her that she committed a mortal sin every time she read that paper. She replied she believed she did not, and would continue to read it. "'Then,' says the priest, 'you are a Protestant, and you will not be allowed the sacraments.'" The cry of the priests against their political opponents used to be that they were infidels. This priest preferred the less vague but more ridiculous charge of Protestantism, believing, or pretending to believe, that it was some sort of heresy to differ with him in a purely political matter. (*RFF* 2:118)

This brief anecdote serves several functions—for example, to demonstrate the everyday means by which the Catholic Church sought to repress the Fenian movement and the way that such surveillance intersects with sectarianism. The story of the unnamed "Miss —" also makes clear that Fenianism, or even sympathy for or interest in the movement, became subject to charges of heresy and blasphemy. As O'Leary's analysis makes apparent, such charges displayed a strange elasticity that unveils their purpose. He calls attention to the accusation's multiple, almost protean definitions when wielded by the unidentified priest. "Father —" first identifies reading the official newspaper of the Fenian movement as "a mortal sin," which quickly becomes equivalent to "Protestantism," an anathematized identity in the context of sectarian politics. Finally, the recrimination is described more generally as "heresy," a charge that conflates political dissent and religious disobedience into a single transgression.

O'Leary mocks the logic at work here, challenging the Church's authority to intervene in what he defines as "purely political" matters. He makes clear that the charges of blasphemy and heresy provided a method for ecclesiastical interventions into secular affairs. This story stands as one of many examples that O'Leary provides in order to establish how Fenianism and its primary organization in Ireland, the IRB, were represented by the Church and also by constitutional nationalists as blasphemous and heretical. Yet, in the course of his *Recollections,* O'Leary does not simply reject these indictments. Rather, as do several other Catholic Fenian writers, he embraces the descriptives at the same time that he interrogates the Church's use of them. For example, by the end of O'Leary's text, he insists upon his text as an example of political and religious blasphemy.

What is at stake in this recurrent claim to blaspheme in Fenian recollections? Using O'Leary's text as my primary example, I will explore why Fenians adopt the position of blasphemer, and how they rework what it means to be heretical and blasphemous. This strategic use of religious discourse provides

the foundation for a critique of institutionality and an analysis of the problems that institutions pose for anticolonial nationalisms in particular. By speaking from the position of blasphemer and heretic, Fenians articulate a nationalist politics that reckons with the problems of state formation, the sociopolitical role of the Catholic Church in Ireland, and the imbrication of Church and state in the 1860s, problems that became more urgent as the process of decolonization approached at the end of the nineteenth century. Since blasphemy tests and hence reveals the limits of toleration within political and religious institutions, Fenian recollections such as O'Leary's anticipate some of the problems that radical nationalism faced upon embracing the state form when imagining an independent Ireland. Would it be possible for Fenians to imagine an Irish state that did not reproduce the imperialist state? At the same time, the authority of the Church to accuse Fenians (some of whom were Protestants or atheists) of blasphemy could only be applied unevenly. The category of blasphemy reveals sectarian national identity and religious difference as problematic foundations for an anticolonial politics; one can see a latent critique of identity politics as the basis of nationalist mobilization. At the same time, the charge of "Protestantism" in the preceding anecdote suggests the tendency of institutions toward homogenization and discrimination rather than a full calculation of diversity. Fenian writers ask whether there might be some way to envision a more complex relation between self and nation than the subordination of the individual to the larger social unit through institutions and through a unitary identity. How might blasphemy and heresy provide some kind of answer to these thorny questions?

O'Leary devotes a surprising amount of attention to the doctrine of "no priests in politics" and to the Catholic Church's condemnation of Fenianism in the 1850s and 1860s.[62] His second volume is in fact overtaken by the subject:

> I am afraid I have wearied my readers, and shall have to weary them still more, with details of our protracted controversy with the priests. But if I instruct someone, I am content, for the nonce at least, to amuse but slightly. Scarcely anyone in Ireland knows anything, save vaguely, of that not distant past of which I am writing . . . of the war we waged against the priests some thirty years ago, or, perhaps I should say, of the war the priests waged against us; a

62. An overwhelming portion of the second volume is devoted to this subject. For example, the following chapter titles appear throughout: "Emigration—Priests in Politics," "Kickham—Dr. Cullen—Father Cooke," "Prevaricating Priests and Contradictory Bishops," "Heroic Capitals—Heroic Priests and Other," and "Priests in Politics, and A Particular Priest."

> war the like of which is being fought over again before my eyes as I write, and which I fear will have to be fought over and over again before Irishmen can possess their souls in peace or their bodies in safety. (*RFF* 2:116–17)

What begins as an apology to the reader becomes a rationale for his obsessive representation of the "war" between Fenianism and the Catholic Church. O'Leary positions the Fenian doctrine of "no priests in politics" as part of a continuum, a protracted battle against the exercise of power by the Church in secular matters that continues into the 1890s, the history of which is repressed as new forms of history and politics emerge later in the century.

Several historical processes have explanatory power when considering the continuum posited by O'Leary. First, he clearly wishes to offer an account of the specific period represented by his *Recollections.* He documents with great care the systematic denunciation of Fenianism by the Catholic Church in the 1850s and 1860s. He describes how Catholic Fenians were subject to religious penalties—denial of the sacraments, refusal of absolution, even excommunication—as were those who read, distributed, or sold the *Irish People.*[63] Sunday services in many parishes included lengthy "altar denunciations" of those in the community who sympathized with Fenians (*RFF* 2:66). Such altar denunciations often named businesspeople who sold the paper and demanded that all members of the parish boycott these venders (*RFF* 2:67). He includes newspaper narratives describing how newspaper readers lost their jobs within the Catholic education system or when a priest "would go to their employers and deprive them of their employment" (*RFF* 2:118).

Shifting his focus to Church leadership, he provides a chronicle of condemnations by Church officials such as Cardinal Cullen. Fenian oaths required the use of God's name to swear allegiance to the IRB, "inviolable secrecy regarding all the transactions of this secret society,"[64] and total commitment to the cause of Irish independence. Priests and bishops objected to the use of God's name in the oath-taking and to the clause of secrecy that prevented Fenians from making full confessions. When the oath was amended to remove the clause of secrecy, religious condemnation continued, focusing on the blasphemous utterance of God's name. Fenians pointed out that the Church had long supported other oath-taking movements, only to find that new justifications for the denunciation appeared. Cardinal Cullen attacked the Fenian press as "one of the most fatal and widely diffused means

63. For historical documentation of such religious penalties, see Newsinger 32–39.
64. The original oath of the Irish Revolutionary Brotherhood is reproduced in *RFF* 1:120.

employed by the demon for the destruction of souls . . . which, whilst pretending to be the organs of the Irish people, seem to have no object but to vilify the Catholic Church, and to withdraw our people from its pale" (cited in *RFF* 2:49). Catholics were told that "the only protection against the poison they contain, is to banish them from every house, and to destroy them when they fall into your hands" (*RFF* 2:50). Cullen warned that Fenianism was driven by the "revolutionary spirit" of Continental revolutions and would lead to rabid attempts "to abridge the rights and liberties of the Catholic Church" by the "irreligious nationalists of Ireland."[65] To demonstrate how Cullen's denunciation was put into practice, O'Leary includes accounts of the surveillance of Catholic Fenians by Catholic priests, who "play the detective in the service of England" (*RFF* 2:123).

O'Leary suggests that the basis for Church censure shifted over time; what began as an imputation of religious transgression had become a campaign to repress a politics deemed at odds with the institutional power of the Church. Hence, blasphemy was transformed into a political accusation, an indictment in a struggle concerning secular power. The Church's exercise of power both mimicked and was co-opted by state apparatuses of power. At the same time, the charge of blasphemy served as a mechanism of homogenization, attempting to reassert a Catholic national identity at the very moment in which the Church claimed that Catholic hegemony was threatened.

O'Leary describes this historical episode as illustrative of a larger process by which the Church gained social and political power in mid-nineteenth-century Ireland, or, as Kevin Whelan has put it, the "unusually cohesive marriage of church and nation" in the postfamine era.[66] Historian Emmet Larkin has documented the devotional revolution in Ireland that between 1850 and the 1870s transformed the fabric and culture of Irish life.[67] During this period, Catholicism infused Irish identity, producing a new union of religious and national forms. This revolution laid the groundwork for the institutional power and incursions into politics that so outraged O'Leary. Well after the days of Cullen's denunciation of Fenianism and the *Irish People,* the Church continued to play a complex and commanding role in numerous secular affairs, including eventually the Land League at the time that O'Leary wrote.

65. Cited in Newsinger 38.

66. "The Cultural Effects of the Famine," in *The Cambridge Companion to Irish Culture,* ed. Joe Cleary and Claire Connolly (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 140.

67. Emmet Larkin, *The Historical Dimension of Irish Catholicism* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1984).

Thus, the "war" between the Church and Fenians can indeed be located as part of the historical continuum that O'Leary describes.

O'Leary identified himself with an antisectarian, secular tradition of nationalism. He writes that, while many individual Fenians practiced Catholicism devoutly, the movement in most instances rejected all attempts "to connect, directly or indirectly, Catholicity and Nationality" (*RFF* 2:66). To him, the remedy to the expanding role of the Church in Ireland, its position as a kind of second state apparatus of power, was a strict policy of "no priests in politics." He defines this doctrine as "never, of course in the least den[ying] the absolute right of a priest . . . to hold any political opinion he liked but . . . wholly refus[ing] to consider that a political opinion gained any weight or force from being held by a priest" (*RFF* 2:15). He makes clear that the invocation of sacred power and the use of the Church's moral and social authority could be channeled easily into forms of control and coercion. According to O'Leary, the power of Catholicism in Ireland necessitated the circumscription of its role in political matters, whether its power is mobilized for or against nationalist causes. This might address what he saw as two seemingly antithetical but closely related dangers—Catholic nationalism and the Church's destruction of the more radical forms of anticolonial nationalism.

Such elaborations of "no priests in politics" remained blasphemous and heretical even in the 1890s. He states:

> . . . this is as good a time as another to say a few words on our much-used and much-abused phrase—no priests in politics. Up to a short while ago, your orthodox agrarian person, with his P.P. as chairman of his society, and a C.C. as secretary, was quite ready to hold that the doctrine of 'no priests in politics' was *rank heresy.* But agrarianists have fallen out, the shoe pinches again, and one section is quite Fenian now on this 'no priests in politics' question, while the other side, naturally, if not over wisely, thinks or pretends to think, that there is *flat blasphemy* in the phrase. (My emphases, *RFF* 2:180)

Referring to the divisive and paradoxical role of the clergy in the Land League, this passage makes clear why the categories of blasphemy and heresy had continued analytic power for O'Leary. If the Church's claim to dictate political belief and practice was not curtailed, there was no hope that "Irishmen [could] possess their souls in peace or their bodies in safety." The growing institutional and secular power of the Catholic Church constituted a threat to freedom of mind and body in Ireland, much as the British state

did.[68] Hence, while O'Leary ironizes the accusation that reading a Fenian newspaper is a blasphemous or heretical act, he professes that his text is blasphemous and heretical. Avowing blasphemy and heresy becomes a method of critique as well as a form of resistance to the exercises of institutional power documented so thoroughly in the *Recollections.*

In her study of conversion, *Outside the Fold,* Gauri Viswanathan provides elegant definitions of blasphemy and heresy that can help us to understand O'Leary investment in these categories. She writes:

> If blasphemers are defined as those who commit verbal offense in shocking, vile and crude language or imagery but without necessarily attacking points of doctrine, heretics on the other hand are those whose alternative interpretations of fundamental religious truths substantially undermine the stable foundation on which those truths stand, regardless of whether the language they use is tasteless or not. . . . A simple, yet unacknowledged, notion is that blasphemers may blaspheme without undermining the content or truth of any proposition because blasphemy's enemy is not a text or a creed but a community, along with the codes and rules it employs to sanction membership within it. Blasphemy shades into heresy when the text is subsumed so entirely within the identity of a community that the community *is* the text.[69]

I would add Joss Marsh's reminder that these terms are closely related to the categories of treason and sedition; all of them mark the boundary between that deemed permissible and that which is prohibited by an institution of power at a given time.[70] Thus, to be a blasphemer and a heretic is to operate within the parameters of an institution while challenging its boundaries through one's modes of speech as well as through radical critique. One defies the right of the institution to dictate not only belief but right action and expression. The heretical blasphemer occupies a position that redefines institutional limits by testing them and challenges the ideals of an institution, for example toleration or democracy, through provocation.

O'Leary understood the Church's power over and influence on the hearts and minds of many Irish people and its central position within Irish cul-

68. O'Leary makes the material and analogical connection between Church and imperial state explicit numerous times throughout his *Recollections.* For example, he cites Charles Kickham's exclamation: "The standard of the Church and the British flag! What a strange conjunction!" (*RFF* 2:69).

69. *Outside the Fold: Conversion, Modernity, and Belief* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998), 242.

70. *Word Crimes: Blasphemy, Culture and Literature in Nineteenth-Century England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 7.

ture. Similarly, Home Rule signaled that the dismantling of the colonial state would be slow and that the new Irish state in its stead would be at least temporarily implicated with colonial power, mimicking its forms. Blasphemy and heresy, as Viswanathan and Marsh define them, provide a way for O'Leary to articulate a challenge from within, to resist a culture of consent, to dissent and to protest under the shadow of institutions that began to appear more and more ubiquitous and unassailable in late-nineteenth-century Ireland.

We have seen that O'Leary adopts the position of blasphemer and heretic in relation to other institutions as well. For example, he blasphemes against the orthodoxy central to mainstream constitutional nationalism at the end of the nineteenth century. This rejection of nationalist orthodoxy, his invocation of "the people" over Home Rule politics or particular leaders, makes clear that his blasphemy and heresy are not strictly religious but also always political. By the late nineteenth century, both the Church and constitutional nationalism worked to produce a culture of consent and to marginalize certain forms of protest and dissent. This process can be described as the ascent of political and religious homogenization and hegemony. For O'Leary, the categories of blasphemy and heresy offer a way to make a space for that excess of the people and for forms of alternative politics that challenge the institutions that claim to represent them.[71]

In "Between Filiation and Affiliation: The Politics of Postcolonial Memory," Kevin Whelan writes:

> The successor state sponsored a nationalistic project, constructed around the hegemonic bloc of the national bourgeoisie (agrarian and small business), and intertwining the state with the Church, education and media. Culturally, the new state lived within the paradigms created by the gifted generations of ideologues between 1880 and 1920—notably Cusack, Hyde, Pearse, Yeats and Corkery—who created . . . a Catholic nationalist version of Irish history . . . the ossifying orthodoxy of the emergent nationalistic state which retains the institutional and ideological apparatus of the prior colonial state.[72]

In a sense, some Fenians provided an alternative politics that critiques the process described by Whelan. Several historians have demonstrated convinc-

71. This argument builds on the work of Viswanathan, in particular the epilogue to her study of conversion, which is called suggestively "The Right to Belief" (240–54).

72. "Between Filiation and Affiliation: The Politics of Postcolonial Memory," in *Ireland and Postcolonial Theory,* ed. Clare Carroll and Patricia King (Cork: Cork University Press, 2003), 94.

ingly how Fenians advocated a separation of Church and state and how that program had a lasting impact on the political landscape of Ireland.[73] However, Fenians were not simply engaged in a critique of sectarianism, an advocation for the separation of Catholicism and the state, or anticlericalism. Rather, they present a radical critique of institutionality in the forms of both Church and state. By adopting the position of heretical blasphemers, these writers offer an analysis of what can happen when powerful institutions curtail the right to express religious or political belief. For when belief is codified into unquestionable doctrine or truth, it can lose its elasticity and its ability to challenge that which contains it. At stake in the assertion of heretical blasphemy is the continued right to speak the unspeakable, whether seditious, offensive, or blasphemous. At the same time, such provocations envision institutions in a constant state of productive contestation.

Claiming a position as a heretical blasphemer allowed a writer such as O'Leary to critique institutions and to maintain a critical relation to them even as the call to invest in them intensified. He reminds us that, as we imagine and engage with the institutions that govern us, there must always be a space that exists between the subject and the nation-state, between the individual and any institution to which he or she is subject. There must be a space for agency and resistance, a space for transgression and a space from which to blaspheme, from which to speak as a heretic.

O'LEARY'S *RECOLLECTIONS* AND THE CRITIQUE OF HISTORICISM

Throughout his *Recollections,* O'Leary engages in a critique of forms of writing associated with the nation-state—either the British imperial nation-state or forms of Irish nationalism defined by constitutional statist politics. For example, he mocks the popular Irish nationalist text *Speeches from the Dock,* which claims to document the speeches given by Fenian prisoners at their sentencing hearings for treason-felony. As O'Leary begins to represent the scene of his own speech, he interrupts his narrative:

> I must begin by saying that I scarcely recognize myself—what I fancy was my demeanour and what I know were my feelings—in the picture given of me, notably in a book called "Speeches from the Dock." Not that I at all complain

73. See, for example, McCartney and Rafferty.

> of this picture, which, by the way, seems to have been slavishly followed by nearly all subsequent accounts of the trial. It is meant to be, and indeed is, highly complimentary, but I cannot help feeling that it is more than a little imaginative throughout. I hope I "stepped boldly to the front," but I was, and am, utterly unconscious of the "flash of fire in my dark eyes," and "the scowl on my features," and, if "I looked hatred and defiance on judges, lawyers, jurymen, and all the rest of them," these were certainly not the feelings with which I was at all conscious of regarding any of these entities. . . . [N]ow trying to realise the scene, some thirty years after the acting of it, I am unable to recall any feeling stronger than one of great intellectual interest in the whole proceedings. . . . (*RFF* 2:220)

O'Leary takes the classic nationalist rendering of a particular historical scene and reveals it as a representation that romanticizes if not fabricates the events of the trials. By doing so, he calls attention to the way that all historical writing re-presents rather than presents events. A text such as *Speeches from the Dock* obscures this process from the reader and, through its truth-claim, becomes a template for all historical writing that follows. In his critical reading, O'Leary reveals that much mainstream nationalist writing is driven by a historicism that subordinates all politics and personal experience to the telos and narratives of the modern nation-state. His reading of *Speeches* takes on the text's representation of him as romantic hero, as martyr, and as ideal male national subject. O'Leary engages in a critique of "history" and historicism that is invested in, as Dipesh Chakrabarty argues, "the universalization of the nation-state as the most desirable form of political community."[74] In this case, personal memory and the historical documentation of the trial prove completely incompatible, for O'Leary, the subject who is represented in the courtroom, cannot recognize himself in the text. Although *Speeches from the Dock* is subject to O'Leary's irony, his memory does not serve as a corrective and cannot restore the truth of the account to the reading public. Instead, O'Leary is strategically amnesiac, "unable to recall" the facts of that event. In other words, there are experiences and politics that this mode of history-writing cannot access, and there are dangers in remembering iconic moments of history in the service of the nation-state.

There are other narratives against which O'Leary writes, for he stages several other texts as counterpoints to his own. During his first attempt to articulate the genre and form of his writing, O'Leary inserts his recollections

74. "Postcoloniality and the Artifice of History," in *Provincializing Europe* 41.

into a tradition and an archive. After describing the unavoidably "narrow" and "egotistic" qualities of his text, he writes:

> A veracious history the public may have hereafter, as a highly mendacious and malignant one it has already, and other recollections than mine have already appeared, as still others—notably those of my friend Luby—are, I hope, destined to see the light and spread it. (*RFF* 1:67)

He situates his book within a continuum of "other recollections," many of which share a common project of "see[ing] the light and spread[ing] it." Yet, this archive also contains texts that do not share this political agenda or that inhabit the claim to write Fenian history toward totally different ends. O'Leary constructs two textual poles—"a veracious history the public may have hereafter" (historical accounts of Fenianism yet to be written) and "a highly mendacious and malignant one it has already." These are also temporal poles, the text of the future and that of the past, and therefore he locates his own account very clearly in the present moment of his writing—as well as in the liminal space between the possibility of veracity and pre-existing mendacity.

The history that has *already* been written and circulated in the public sphere is a book published under a pseudonym twenty years earlier. In a footnote, O'Leary explains his reference:

> I am alluding, of course, to a book published in London in 1877, entitled "The Secret History of the Fenian Conspiracy; its Origin, Objects, and Ramifications By John Rutherford." This is one horrible libel from beginning to end, and seems to be compiled together out of the reports of the various State trials, of the American conventions, and a narrative of John O'Mahony, of which I shall have to speak hereafter. All these were easily accessible sources, and there was nothing in the least "secret" about them. The "History" is, on the whole, as vile a book as I have ever read, and that is saying much. "John Rutherford" is, of course, a false name, and I cannot make out that anyone can even give a probable guess at the ruffian who used it. The book was avidly swallowed by the British public at the time of its publication. . . . (*RFF* 1:67)

This reference to the Rutherford account[75] provides another point of entry

75. There is debate about whether there actually was a Fenian named John Rutherford. The text has been attributed to other writers, including British colonial officials. For example, in *The Irish Book*

into O'Leary's rejection of writing history. Upon its publication in 1877, Rutherford's *Secret History* offered to the British and Irish public a supposedly authentic narrative of the Fenian movement by "an impartial historian."[76] In this instance, the writer Rutherford asserts his position of a Fenian as a means of legitimation; the claim of direct experience, of witnessing, functions as assurance that this "history" would reveal the secrets of the conspiracy and would make Fenianism speak its own truth. The subject presents his narrative position as an unencumbered conduit through which formerly concealed truths might be channeled into the public sphere for mass dissemination and consumption. Here, the similarities with Fenian recollections are apparent. Unlike Fenian writings, however, this text takes the form of an anonymous informer narrative, one that rejects allegiance to Irish nationalism in any form. Deeply suspicious of such claims of revelation and of truth-telling, O'Leary unmasks Rutherford's formulation as a fiction, one that participates in and legitimates a libelous representation of Fenianism and that also obscures its own methodology of welding together scraps of easily accessible official documents.[77] As O'Leary establishes that the claim to witnessing in Rutherford's *Secret History* is problematic, the stakes of his own refusal to provide a definitive history of Fenianism become more apparent.

In the passage above, O'Leary's metaphor of readers "avidly swallow[ing]" Rutherford's book reinforces his critique of the mass consumption of such texts by "the British public." In this moment, O'Leary recognizes that the narrative logic of such "history" and "revelation" about Fenianism is hegemonic, and that popular publishers and newspapers function as ideological state apparatuses. Here Louis Althusser's theorization of how ISAs function is most useful:

> . . . it is essential to say that for their part Ideological State Apparatuses function massively and predominately *by ideology,* but they also function

Lover of May 1910, the editors respond to a query about O'Leary's condemnation of the Rutherford text by writing: "Has not the secret been recently disclosed? Sir Robert Anderson, who has admitted the authorship of some of the famous articles on 'Parnellism and Crime,' says in Blackwood's for March: 'Forty years ago . . . I published the secret history of the Fenian movement up to date'!—Ed." (136–37).

76. *The Secret History of the Fenian Conspiracy: Its Origin, Objects, & Ramifications,* 2 vols. (London: C. Kegan Paul and Co, 1877), 1. Hereafter, this text will be cited as *SH.*

77. O'Leary's critique of the Rutherford text is not isolated. The publication of this "secret history" generated enormous outcry in the nationalist press in Ireland. For example, see the *Irishman* (Dublin), November 3–29, 1877, for both notices of the book and letters to the editor. O'Leary himself sent a letter to the editor of the *Freeman's Journal* dated November 5, 1877, which was published two weeks later. It was titled "Anti-Fenian Fictions."

> secondarily by repression, even if ultimately, but only ultimately, this is very attenuated and concealed, even symbolic. (Original emphasis, 145)

This "double 'functioning'" (145) of repression and ideology opens up O'Leary's analysis of the ways in which an account such as Rutherford's operates in the public sphere. Much like the cartoons and mainstream newspaper articles about Fenianism that I have already examined, the "secret history" disseminates counterinsurgent ideology and participates in the interpellation of British citizen-subjects as "not-Fenian." Althusser continues:

> Each of them [ISAs] contributes towards this single result in a way proper to it. The political apparatus by subjecting individuals to the political State ideology, the indirect (parliamentary) or 'direct' (plebiscitary or fascist) 'democratic' ideology. The communications apparatus by cramming every 'citizen' with daily doses of nationalism, chauvinism, liberalism, moralism, etc. by means of the press, radio, and television. The same goes for cultural apparatus. . . . (154)[78]

Rutherford's and other published representations of Fenianism as the irrational, conspiratorial, constitutionally violent enemy of England serve such imperialist nationalist ends, producing ready-made counterinsurgent ideology for their British readers.

The text also operates through and in conjunction with repression in multiple ways. The Rutherford narrative and others like it might serve as justification for the use of extreme state tactics in the repression of Fenian insurgency—for example, the suspension of habeas corpus in Ireland; the use of British warships to prevent all U.S. vessels (ostensibly carrying arms and Fenian recruits) from landing in Ireland; and the arrest, court-martial, and public flogging of Irish soldiers and officers in the British army believed to be members of the IRB.[79] As I argued in the previous chapter, *The Secret His-*

78. The "single result" to which Althusser refers here is the reproduction of capitalist relations of exploitation. See chapter 1, in which I discuss the relation between antinationalist propaganda and the capitalist mode of production in Great Britain. Also, see Amy E. Martin, "'Becoming a Race Apart': Irish Racial Difference and British Class Consciousness in Engels' *The Condition of the Working Class in England,*" in *Was Ireland a Colony? Economics, Politics, and Culture in Nineteenth-Century Ireland,* ed. Terrence McDonough (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2005), 186–211. In this article, through a close reading of Marx and Engels's writings on Ireland, I examine the relationship between racialist discourses on Irishness and the absorption of racialized Irish populations necessary to industrialization and to the expansion of the capitalist mode of production. For a sample of these writings, see Marx and Engels.

79. For the history of such States measures, see Newsinger; Leon Ò Broin, *Fenian Fever: An*

tory existed within a larger field of anti-Fenian ideological production in the United Kingdom that helped both to build a public consensus concerning the danger of Fenianism and to incite a tacit endorsement of military occupation of Ireland. These representations of Fenianism as depoliticized, criminalized, and racially inherent violence often took the narrative form of revelations like Rutherford's; they claimed to expose the concealed nature of secret societies such as the IRB and the Fenian Brotherhood.

Simultaneously, this and similar texts also performed the symbolic repression to which Althusser alludes. By producing the "definitive" and "objective" truth, Rutherford's story served to repress alternative understandings of Fenianism such as those contained within recollections. The "horrible libel" not only *is swallowed* by the British public but works to *swallow* and saturate the public sphere, leaving little room for counterhegemonic narratives of anticolonial insurgency. The textual logic of *The Secret History* is organized around a claim to be definitive, to sort through all other accounts and to offer the public only that which is truthful.

Indeed, this is exactly how the Rutherford text stages itself—as the penultimate text on Fenianism that refutes and supplants all others. In the introductory chapter, the writer evaluates systematically all preceding writing on "the Fenian Conspiracy" as biased and misleading:

> So far, those who have written of Fenianism have written to distort. The mere journalist, or magazine essayist, had little or no purpose save to be interesting. Among the indisputable facts that came under his notice, it was natural that he should prefer the sensational. . . . It was the purpose of antagonists to depreciate and throw ridicule over the whole affair, to make it out contemptible in its proportions, absurd in its projects, criminal in its motives, and sanguinary in its actions, in short, a thing as detestable and repulsive as it was insane. . . . Nor are the statements of those who wrote on the side of Fenianism more trustworthy than the statements of their antagonists. For this there are various reasons. They wrote as advocates and apologists; not as narrators of simple facts. (*SH* 1:1)

The claim to objectivity, to write as a "historian" who negotiates and repudiates political affiliation, secures *The Secret History* as definitive history.

Anglo-Irish Dilemma (New York: New York University Press, 1971); Patrick Quinlivan and Paul Rose, *The Fenians in England, 1865–1872* (London: John Calder, 1982); and Liz Curtis, *The Cause of Ireland: From the United Irishmen to Partition* (Belfast: Beyond the Pale, 1994), 60–83.

Rutherford is thereby able to discredit all other forms of history-writing, all narrative alternatives to his own.

The speaker admits to the methodology of which O'Leary accuses him—using popular texts as the basis of his history: "we guard ourselves against unscrupulous contradiction and malignant lie and libel, as far as the thing can be done, by giving, wherever it is possible, the *ipsissima verba* of the Fenians themselves."[80] This statement itself demonstrates a contradiction in the methodology and truth-claim of the Rutherford text. How can the "advocates and apologists" who are characterized as untrustworthy provide the basis for the truth as the Rutherford narrator has defined it? 'We' resolves this contradiction through recourse to a supposedly objective interpretive process:

> Every Fenian who wrote anything of the conspiracy in which he took part and of his share therein, wrote with a purpose and under circumstances which compelled him to suppress and distort. But though no reliance is to be placed on his statements as a whole, it must not be supposed that there is *no* truth at all in those statements; there is truth, and a good deal of it, therein, if one only knew how to get at it and extract it from the mass of falsehood that surrounds it. Fortunately for those who possess this knowledge, and who desire to use it in studying the history of Fenianism, there is no single event of any importance in the whole conspiracy, from first to last, which has not been the subject of fierce literary discussion between bitterly hostile partisans. The judicious comparison of rival accounts by one who has watched the open events of the conspiracy—closely, impartially, and cautiously—may enable one to make some little selection with accuracy.[81]

The speaker claims to occupy a long-awaited impartial perspective through a specific interpretive faculty and methodology; these allow him to distinguish truth from fiction within the text. This ability must be coupled with the claim to have witnessed. What delimits O'Leary's ability to write the history of Fenianism shores up the supposed veracity of the Rutherford *Secret History.* But this witnessing must take a very specific form. In a strikingly Arnoldian moment, the Rutherford writer serves simultaneously as informer, anthropologist, literary critic, and historian whose supposedly disinterested observation

80. Rutherford 7.
81. Ibid. 5.

allows him to produce truthful knowledge about Fenianism.[82] He claims the position of the imperialist historian.

The introduction to *The Secret History* reveals the importance of nationalist writings to this colonialist project of writing the history of "the Fenian conspiracy." The writer remarks on the "fortunate" production of "fierce literary discussion," for such writings provide the imperial historian with an archive of irrational writings from which to extract the truth. In keeping with British and Unionist ideas about Irish national character, the Rutherford narrator provides an aesthetic evaluation of the Fenian writers who produce this archival material: "hardly a man who could put three sentences together, in tolerable English, who did not write. And a good many who could not do this, yet could and did write after their fashion."[83] Paradoxically Rutherford's narrative depends upon such material; the text could not claim to provide a veracious history without it.

This use of Fenian texts in Rutherford relies on a logic employed by the British state in its tactics to suppress Fenian anticolonial insurgency. Therefore, there was much more at stake in the formulation of texts as evidence and the question of how to reveal the truth held within them, than simply who was 'right' about historical events. For example, in their 1865 trial, aside from a single informer, the primary evidence used to prove that O'Leary and other Fenians committed treason-felony was material published in the *Irish People*.[84] Large sections of text written and published by the defendants were included in the indictments against them. In addition, throughout the 1860s and 1870s, as part of a system of surveillance and policing, Dublin Castle assembled huge collections of articles clipped from Irish nationalist newspapers all over Ireland as well as in Britain and the United States.[85] The use of Fenian writings to establish fact and the question of how to read these writings were central to the imperial state's suppression of Fenianism.

82. Ranajit Guha's formulation of "the prose of counter-insurgency" has helped me to read the Rutherford text. Guha's analysis of colonialist historiography provides a useful discussion of witnessing and the use of memoir to construct a discourse "at the very intersection of colonialism and historiography, endowing it with a duplex character linked at the same time to a system of power and the particular manner of its representation" (51).

83. Rutherford 6. For an excellent discussion of how misuse of the English language serves as a primary method for delineating the Irish as an inferior race in British colonialist discourse, see Clair Wills, "Language Politics, Narrative, Political Violence," *Oxford Literary Review* 13, nos. 1–2 (1991): 20–60.

84. See "The indictments of James Stephens, Thomas Clarke Luby, and John O'Leary," in the collection of the National Library of Ireland.

85. See the Larcom Papers, Manuscript Collection, NLI.

Placed in this context, O'Leary's understanding of the Rutherford account elucidates his general suspicions concerning the genre and methods of history-writing and its attendant claim to truth. O'Leary's choice of narrative structure, his theorization of the genre of recollection, seems informed by an acknowledgment of the difficulty of telling the truth of Fenianism in the context of dominant counterinsurgent narratives. We need to consider O'Leary's recollections as employing a strategy of resistance in response to hegemonic constructions of history and truth, as attempting to resist the representational codes of knowledge-production that had been harnessed in service of the colonialist state.

O'Leary extends his analysis of Rutherford's *A Secret History of Fenianism* to a larger discursive field of imperialist writing. He expresses suspicion about British populist and state discourses not only concerning Fenianism but regarding a broader colonial context. Right before his description of Rutherford's book, he writes of representations of the Sepoy rebellion in the British press:

> Our feelings—that is the feelings of the great mass of Irishmen—were entirely on the side of India during the mutiny. We were altogether untouched by the thrilling stories of Indian cruelty, knowing too well, from our own history, that England was quite sure to give as good as she got; and all subsequent and authentic accounts of the suppression of the mutiny show that we were quite right in preserving our equanimity, and that England in every sense showed herself quite worthy of her ancient fame, on this occasion. (1:58)

This passage clarifies O'Leary's project in two important ways. First, it is one of several instances in which O'Leary's critique of British representations of Fenianism becomes part of a broader anti-imperialist analysis. He demonstrates an awareness of a larger pattern of media counterinsurgency by the British imperial state. In other words, widely disseminated British representations of Fenianism and of the "Indian Mutiny" of 1857 stand as examples of the prose of counterinsurgency, strategies of representation and knowledge in which "an insurgent is not a subject of understanding or interpretation but of extermination, and the discourse of history, far from being neutral, serves directly to instigate official violence."[86]

In O'Leary's account, however, the position of the colonial subject allows for subversive acts of reading, for encounters with such supposedly "truthful

86. Guha, "The Prose of Counter-Insurgency," 64.

accounts" that resist the ideological function of the text and leave the reader "untouched" by the sensationalism of press representations. From this position, the reader is able to understand such narratives through the lens of "our own history," for example, Irish nationalists' experiences of British state tactics of the suppression of anticolonial rebellion. Therefore, O'Leary resituates representations of insurgents' "cruelty," decontextualized and criminalized as irrational violence, within the frame of the violence of colonial rule, the basis of England's "ancient fame" in the colonies. The restitution of the insurgent's consciousness and experience of history through reading produces the possibility of a subversive analysis of official history.

This passage also discloses O'Leary's belief in the possibility of "authentic accounts" that might work against and rectify "the thrilling stories of Indian cruelty" and similar representations. This point adds weight to my previous suggestion that O'Leary's rejection of the truth-telling project of history is an instrumental one, a narrative strategy of resistance rather than a wholesale rejection of the possibility of telling the truth about Fenianism. O'Leary's writing style implies not that an objective truth does not exist but rather that the claim to truth is most often monopolized by the imperial state and its apparatuses of knowledge and textuality. That which is constructed as truth seeks also to close off or to repress other experiences and knowledges of colonialism. O'Leary's *Recollections* attempts to extricate his writing from the project of counterinsurgency and to call attention to the ways in which productions of countertruths can make themselves complicit with that against which they are written.

He highlights the problem of how a political movement like Fenianism—decentered and to some degree a nationalism against the state—can write its own history and the history of the nation. His narrative strategy resists the centering project in texts such as the Rutherford's *Secret History,* sensational press accounts of Fenian "outrages," and caricatures and articles that appeared in *Punch* magazine and the *London Times.* By rejecting history-writing and the imperative to speak the truth and by insisting on a limited, "egotistic," and nonlinear narrative structure, O'Leary's *Recollections* is not an incomplete text or simply a failed history or autobiography. Its limited and fragmentary status, its elaborate structure of disclaimers, resists the protocols of British narratives of counterinsurgency that constantly attempt to recenter Fenianism—through racialist logic, through a claim to reveal its true secret, through the assertion of a consistent, unitary identity of the insurgent and of the nation. In this way, recollections such as O'Leary's work at what David Lloyd calls "an interface between the state form and what it cannot assimilate,

transforming the residua of its historical processes into a limit on its unity and totality and, potentially at least, into sites for emergent and articulate resistance."[87]

For O'Leary, this interface is most clearly manifested in the position of the insurgent writer as witness, particularly witness to the truth of his or her insurgent movement; this structure of witnessing, so similar to the synecdochal memory that I have described earlier, is a perilous part of the genre of Fenian recollections. O'Leary recognizes the ways in which witnessing is a crucial mechanism in dominant anti-Fenian discourses: the Fenian is refused the position of witness to his/her own acts of insurrection as this is afforded only to the state and its racialist vision of irrational violence, or the Fenian informer is made the sole witness of the entire truth of Fenianism, as in the Rutherford text as well as in the profound reliance of British police forces on informers to infiltrate Fenian 'circles.' The genre of recollection attempts to negotiate, refuse, and challenge these forms of witnessing in the service of the state as well as their ideas of history and truth. O'Leary's *Recollections* seeks to re-collect those experiences and forms of witnessing that are written out of both imperial history and many Fenian recollections but only to re-present them in a "fragmentary and episodic"[88] manner that is not accessible to witnessing before the law. This project, I would argue, resonates with Dipesh Chakrabarty's critique of historicism and his call to "provincialize Europe." He writes:

> To attempt to provincialize this "Europe" is to see the modern as inevitably contested, to write over the given and privileged narratives of citizenship other narratives of human connections that draw sustenance from dreamed-up pasts and futures where collectivities are defined neither by the rituals of citizenship nor by the nightmare of "tradition" that "modernity" creates. There are of course no (infra)structural sites where such dreams could lodge themselves. Yet they will recur so long as the themes of citizenship and the nation-state dominate our narratives of historical transition, for these dreams are what the modern represses in order to be.[89]

87. Lloyd, *Ireland after History* 127–28.

88. I take this phrase from Gramsci's theorization of the history of the subaltern. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci,* ed. and trans. Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (New York: International Publishers, 1971), 54–55.

89. "Postcoloniality and the Artifice of History," in *Provincializing Europe* 46.

We can see how the genre of Fenian recollection works to critique the historicism that Chakrabarty so eloquently describes, and it makes space for other "pasts and futures" as well as other narrative modes that provincialize the modern. Like Joyce's melancholic vision, recollections are akin to Kevin Whelan's formulation of radical memory in that they "radicaliz[e] historicism."[90]

O'Leary's refusal of historicism reflects not just intentional resistance to official history. In addition, such narratives exist in a dialectical relation to the organization of Fenianism itself in which no insurgent subject had access to the entire 'truth' of the movement due to its secret and decentralized structure. Therefore, O'Leary's *Recollections* require placement in an archive that is always incomplete. It gestures toward an archive that does not demand corroboration from other texts in the genre, but that requires constant supplementation by other heterogeneous, even contradictory texts to produce an alternative form of history, each offering fragments of a truth that it is both imperative and impossible to tell.

90. Whelan, "The Cultural Effects of the Famine" 152.

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